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ABSTRACT

This special report includes 12 articles on housing and education. A community housing corporation formed to renovate housing in depressed areas in St. Louis, Mo. is described. So-called "gray areas" of housing in New York are analyzed, together with solutions to prevent further deterioration. Factors in the deterioration of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis, Mo. are detailed in another article. Two planning articles discussing factors involved in successful housing projects and suburban housing are included. Other articles deal with cost factors in housing, and confrontation politics relative to housing. The educational articles discuss architectural features of schools which have a liberating influence on the educational processes taking place therein. [Not included in this document is a brief excerpt from George Dennison's "The Lives of Children."] (Author/DM)

SPECIAL *CUE* REPORT

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HOUSING AND EDUCATION

Notes Toward an Introduction

If the word love *comes up between them I am lost.* Stendhal

I

We know very little about the way most of our fellow citizens live, and why: less than we know about life on some South Sea islands. That ignorance is somehow compounded when it comes to children. But only with that knowledge can we begin to comprehend possibilities of individual living and learning, choices we could make, and the consequences for others of social decisions we support.

Always one pleads for more research. It is to be doubted, however, that our knowledge and understanding of common life in this country, of the lives of children, will be fully advanced by the social survey kind of research which has often been our characteristic mode. Most American research into urban education, for example, has sprung from immediate, utilitarian needs — the decisionmakers in Washington requiring information on a major problem of the moment: reading, delinquency, dropouts, integration. Such survey research begins by being problem-oriented, and almost certainly ends with proposals for administrative reform. Inevitably, the picture it builds up is of ghetto life (to use our country's most popular euphemism) as one set of problems, and of middle-class action as administrative change.

The researchers, the government officials, the school officials — all of them accepting the perspective of the closed system of the schools — address themselves to the question, How can we improve our schools? Perhaps it is obvious that their answers are going to be administrator's answers. But given the current crisis in education, from the university on down, doesn't that question show very limited, technocratic concern? Isn't it necessary, in considering innovation, to ask a more profound question? Aren't some of the changes being suggested simply ways of doing better what, perhaps, should not to be done at all? Isn't it possible that more radical changes are, in fact, needed which will go a long way beyond the methods and structures originally developed to meet the traditional pattern of a middle-class education? If our concerns were humane — in the true spirit of science and philosophy — shouldn't we be asking, simply, "How can we educate our young?"

II

Given the relatively little we do know about learning, it is fair to say that there is a not unimportant relationship between the way people live and the way—and what—their young learn. A child is born into an already existing continuum of experience and the continuum (how often do educators talk about 'bringing the child into the learning situation') is the medium within which his learning occurs. But that relationship has seldom influenced the way the structures in which children live their lives — the houses and the schools to name just two — get thought and talked about, and acted on.

Unquestionably the schools have always separated numbers of children from their experience, but in the past the failure to grant children what they are didn't generate noticeable social conflict around the schools. The conflict played itself out somewhere else in society. Thirty years ago children may have considered schools no less boring and dehumanizing than they seem to do now, but until quite recently the schools and the communities they served more or less shared the same values. One reinforced the other. Children were the creatures of their parents' imaginations, not their own.

We may or may not have a more generous view of children today. But the fact is we have more visible conflict. School and community aren't reinforcing each other's notions of the world. And one result is that the public school system's failure to educate the young has become extremely noticeable.

An attempt to deal with the conflict yielded the concept of community control of schools. But despite the concept's striking potential for adding to the general experience of democracy, it has failed in most places to impinge on the lives of many community residents who have no formal ties with schools, it has been implemented only grudgingly by school officials, it has caused even more conflict than it has set out to resolve, and its advocates and practitioners have been hard put to show, pragmatically, what they've accomplished educationally. Even where accomplishment is obvious, the politics of starting and sustaining public community schools have been killing, literally using up people's energies in ways that cannot be sustained. Moreover, it has been so all-consuming an experience for community residents involved that it has kept them from turning to other, related, problems in equal need of attention.

This, however, is not to argue for limiting community control of schools but for placing the principle in a structure broad enough and open enough to sustain not only community schools, but the whole notion of community which lies at the root of the child's educational experience.

III

One way of building community in the city is around the issue of housing, an aspect of living which impinges in an important way on everyone in the community.

It just so happens that the housing system — if it can be called a system — no longer functions for those people on the lower edge of the income spread. In fact, the mounting evidence that the system isn't working seems only to have paralyzed the practitioners into perpetuating the very policies that gave rise to the problem. As Ivan Illich observed in a recent issue of *The New York Review of Books*, "So persuasive is the power of the institutions we've created that they shape not only our preferences, but actually our sense of possibilities."

Wouldn't it be more than useful at this point, therefore, to reexamine the function of community in the operations of our housing system (it might be that a viable housing system depends on the existence of community) and then look once more, through fresh eyes, at the working relations between community and school might be that it has more to do w love than administrative zeal)?

"I have wanted very much to s George Dennison writes in *The L of Children*, "that competence is possible without love, for in this tralized, technological, expert-rid age of ours it needs desperately to said. To say it indicates, too, the di tion of the essential change. We n transfer authority to where con already exists. We must place it wh there is nothing in the environm which will inevitably destroy the v breath of concern. Authority must side in the community. It must local, homely, modest, sensitive. An must be tied, once and for all, to persons who not only do care, but go on caring."

IV

One last point. Community, of cou is a much-abused word, and ofte vague one. It doesn't mean neighb hood, though neighborhood is in spensible to community. And it is by nature parochial. In fact no co munity need want for wisdom. Dennison suggests, "the greatest minds are, in effect, its perman residents. Just as some men are of bureaucracy, others are of the co munity. All philosophers are of community. All scientists are. All ists are. For a community is not a t community unless, in principle, i universal." *Arthur To*

IMPORTANT NOTICE ON BACK PAGE.

Local Alternatives

Jeff-Vander-Lou

A Community Corporation in the Housing Business

The hotel porter who drove me to the Yeatman district from downtown St. Louis owned as to how he hadn't been out that way in some time, although he had lived in the area some 30 years back, one of the first colored families to move in. It was a beautiful place back then, he said. It used to be where all the best people lived, rich white businessmen and professionals. But they all moved eventually, and now it wasn't such a nice place. It wasn't a good address at all, anymore.

Indeed, beginning with the end of War 2, following a process so familiar now in American cities that it has come to seem natural law, the affluent moved out of Yeatman district, and Yeatman turned into a black neighborhood. In the process, city services were downgraded, property became neglected and rundown, the papers began to call Yeatman a ghetto. It went from a place of self-governing homeowners to a place of renters controlled by absentee landlords. And a fiction took hold: call it deneighborhoodization. All that this notion implied, justified, excused, encouraged, represented, or misrepresented, insisted itself into the very way outsiders—notably government officials—came to speak about, see, and experience the place, and it was left to drift downward.

The place was, in fact, down-at-the-heels: colors faded, windows and doors boarded up. It had an uninhabited look. The dearth of cars made the place seem out of time. But under the faded and peeling paint, the townhouses held their lines; evident was a human scale to be envied. At least to the eye it looked like a viable community. And the boarded up townhouse at the corner, the tough-looking kid sitting on the stoop said, was to be his family's home in six month's time. He was making sure nothing happened to it.

The people who came to live in Yeatman's townhouses experienced the public indifference to the place with less than pleasure. Their capacity to use city services was at least as great as those residents whom they replaced. Their need for housing was just as fundamental. Their impulse to live in and be part of a neighborhood was probably more intense. To most of them, Yeatman was a neighborhood, not a ghetto: families were raised there, kids were sent to the public school, holidays were celebrated, people tried to live their lives. Yet for a long time they remained largely passive about their displeasure. Many citizens of the city gladly mistook the passivity for contentment.

Three years before, a group of 10 residents banded together to cut into both the passivity and the indifference. They included a Mennonite minister, a self-employed upholsterer, a retired school teacher, a postman, a trucker, and employees of Monsanto Chemical, Goodwill Industries, and the city. They represented a cross-section of the neighborhood, many owned homes.

"The city planning commission told us nothing could get done for 15 years and we told them we were living here now, we couldn't wait 15 years while our houses came apart. The problem seemed clear enough, people needed homes and there was nothing to do but get homes for them. There's really no option."

With the city's nebulous approval, the group organized a nonprofit community corporation, Jeff-Vander-Lou Inc., opened it for membership to area residents, and set as its immediate goal development and rehabilitation of the hundreds of old and substandard houses in Yeatman that could, in turn, be sold to area residents at prices housing experts no longer consider economically possible.

Led by its president, Macler Shepherd, who by trade is an upholsterer and by calling a brilliantly effective organizer, Jeff-Vander-Lou recruited some 400 members at a series of mass meetings, developed issues and determined priorities. First, the group brought pressure against the city for code enforcement, street lighting, and rubbish collection. Secondly, the organization made it uncomfortable for landlords and realtors who refused to either maintain their property or sell to Jeff-Vander-Lou at nominal prices for rehabilitation.

A city ordinance requires vacant buildings be kept boarded up and carries a stiff fine for violations, and vandals sympathetic to Jeff-Vander-Lou's objectives would see to it that the buildings of uncooperative landlords were kept in continual violation. It cost more than $200 to board up a building each time and more than that in fines when it wasn't done. The economics of it eventually made sense to even the most reluctant landlords.

During the first year of operations, the corporation didn't do much more than survive. But beginning in 1968 and through 1969, working with money contributed by anonymous philanthropic individuals, businesses, church groups, and industrial concerns, the community corporation acquired and renovated first a package of five houses and then a package of thirty. The contract for construction was let to a young black contractor and labor was drawn from area residents, some of whom had learned how to handle heavy earth moving equipment in Vietnam but who still could not get into the building trades unions. Although the unions grumbled about the nonunion work force, and then declined to participate, Jeff-Vander-Lou ignored them, knowing that pickets wouldn't operate inside the black community.

Houses were gutted and redone with new plumbing, new electrical wiring, new heating units, modern kitchens, new roofs. The rehabilitation work averaged $5 a square foot as opposed to $18 a square foot for new construction. With the low-profit margin on which the black contractor was willing to work and the nominal purchase price of property, the community corporation was able to make available solidly built, if not always spacious, one-family homes for anywhere from $9,500 to $13,500, depending on size. Mortgages for 25 30 year periods at 3 percent interest were made available under the federal government's 221h program. The corporation also made some of its own money available on a loan basis, for down payments.

While the housing was getting done, Jeff-Vander-Lou followed up some of the other community development priorities established by members at regular community assemblies. A vacant parcel of land was cleared and turned into a vest pocket park; one of the houses acquired by the corporation was refurbished as a medical clinic, the first such facility in the area, with office space provided free to doctors who donated regular hours to work in the community, and a rental apartment on the second story to pay the costs of running the clinic. (Up until then, most residents who needed medical attention were dependent on the distant municipal hospital where eight-hour waiting periods for routine matters weren't uncom-

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The Housing Act of 1949 set forth a national housing goal: "Realization as soon as feasible . . . of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family." Yet almost two decades later, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders discovered that inadequate housing was one of the major complaints among residents of every area where civil disorders had occurred.

non.) Another house was converted to a way station for dislocated families waiting to be placed in rehabilitated homes. At Opportunity House, as the corporation called it, families learned about budgeting, about the use of utilities, and about local government agencies. Finally, the community group sold Brown Shoe Company on the idea of building a manufacturing plant in Yeatman, with jobs initially for some 300 people.

There were problems. It was difficult to stabilize Jeff-Vander-Lou's membership. People joined to get on the waiting list for homes and when they got placed they no longer showed up at meetings. And it was difficult to get government subsidy. The city had designated a neighboring organization as the area's official poverty agency and receptacle for federal poverty monies.

Shepherd, perhaps the only man in St. Louis who commands respect from black militants and white moderates alike, expounded on the nature of city politics in Jeff-Vander-Lou's backroom one afternoon. Whoever controls the bread, he said, determines how things get done. If you're independent, you don't get bread. Simple as that. People in positions of power, he suggested, didn't want to admit that there were other ways to get things done, perhaps better ways than the ways in which they were accustomed to work. To admit it, he argued, would be to question some notions about poor people being incapable of self-direction and being too unsophisticated to untangle the urban mess left them by their predecessors. Community was an answer, he said, but the only way to get community was by doing it: It meant hard work done by the people most affected because no one else was going to do it. The Urban Coalition's approaches to "helping the ghetto" — seen by the wealthy men who comprise it in exactly those terms — were bones thrown to a dog. "We want business to give us the money, anonymously, without strings. We'll decide what gets done with it. We're not asking business to be charitable. We're suggesting it's in their self-interest. The utilities benefit when we create users of their services. It's perfectly appropriate," he said, "that they put some money into the place."

Earlier in 1969, having shown the job could be done, Jeff-Vander-Lou struck a working relationship with one of the city's largest construction companies to rehabilitate a package of 300 houses. The builder, in turn, convinced the unions that by refusing to cooperate with the community corporation, they would lose out on a lot of business that would get done in any case, not only in Yeatman, but in other black sections of St. Louis, and around the country. Persuaded, the unions negotiated a precedent-setting agreement with Jeff-Vander-Lou which established a new category of work allowing for lower scale wages, and opened up training positions for Yeatman residents who could qualify, eventually, to work anywhere in the country. For its part, the builder expects to gain experience in a field held to have unlimited potential.

The costs of rehabilitation work have already risen since Jeff-Vander-Lou worked its first group of houses, but at $9 a square foot,

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Gray Areas
Confronting Crisis

1. *Gray areas* is a term used widely and ambiguously by planners and urban economists but, in general, it has assumed a pejorative meaning, characterizing neighborhoods moving toward stagnation and decay. It is used, for the most part, to characterize a particular area which while still functioning reasonably well in terms of its major use (as a lower middle income residential neighborhood), is on its way to becoming a slum — with all this implies in the way of physical deterioration and social disorganization. Once the phenomenom is duly observed and recorded, most commentators content themselves with prescribing what seems to be trivial remedies given the magnitude of the problems they themselves have enumerated. The source of salvation is widely believed to be in the direction of reinvigorating the private real estate sector; that is to say in putting the profit back into managing gray area real estate on a long-term basis. To do this would require, among other things, removing the incentive-dampening effects created by such measures as rent control.

Yet upon closer inspection a reasonable man might well conclude that solutions to this problem that depend strongly upon the improved functioning of the private real estate market are not likely to get very far. More radical approaches are required. Failing these, the gray areas can be expected to become in short order tomorrow's slums. Since they currently account for close to 40 percent of the city's total housing stock it is no exaggeration to say that New York is about to confront a housing crisis whose dimensions will dwarf its present one — no mean feat considering the nature of the existing situation.

2. The slums include such communities as Central Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant and the South Bronx. Badly blighted, these areas contain a high proportion of the city's most deteriorated housing stock in its most obsolete forms. A great many of their residents are impoverished or below middle income black and Puerto Rican households (with the upper cut-off point, say, for husband-wife families with two dependent children being between $5,000 and $6,000 in current prices). As of the early 1960s, it is estimated that such areas contained 22 percent of the city's housing stock.

At the other extreme stand the sound areas: the upper East Side of Manhattan, Riverdale in the Bronx, Douglaston in Queens, etc. In these, the housing mix consists of substantial, well-maintained one and two family homes, luxury brownstones, and high quality elevator apartment houses built on a substantial scale (that is, upward of 75 units per structure). The population is predominantly white and (more significantly) firmly lodged in the upper middle and upper portions of the prevailing income distribution (in other words families whose current income range upwards of $10,000-$12,000 on an annual basis). These areas had 40 percent of the city's owner-housing stock.

The gray areas have what's left over which is about 38 percent of the housing. Their housing, compared to most of the sound area

onsists of smaller (and older) one nd two family homes and numer- us smaller apartment houses — ome with elevators, but most of hem five story walkups — built ainly between 1915 and 1935. hese are the residential precincts f the city's lower middle class, still ostly white but increasingly also lack and brown.

These areas cover extensive por- ons of Central Brooklyn, West ueens and the West Bronx, among ther places. They were built up n the wake of new subway con- truction linking them to down- own Manhattan. Most of their esidential structures were put up n a speculative basis by builders with little assistance, direct or in- irect, from the public sector) and ere subsequently owned and oper- ted by a class of small business- en (a *petit bourgeousie,* in fact) ho often lived in one of the partments in these buildings. The uildings themselves were designed o provide housing for families hose life styles and economic pros- ects located them in the lower iddle edge of the prevailing in- ome distribution; Eastern Euro- ean Jews, Italians, and Irish, or eir first-generation offsprings, con- ituted the principal market for ousing in these areas.

After World War II, the nature f the demand for gray area hous- ng underwent a fundamental and dverse change that brought new onstruction virtually to a stand- ill, and initiated a widespread rocess of undermaintenance that d after a number of years to the eterioration in the quality of the ray area's housing stock. There ere, of course, other factors in- olved in this process: The treat- ent of depreciation allowances on ulti-family residential real prop- rty in the federal tax laws; the ty's notably inept rent control w. But the root causes of the long- rm deterioration were changes in emand for gray area housing (as he metropolitan area underwent suburbanization and racial polarization), and the response of the real estate market to these changes.

In this kind of system, the gray areas found themselves laboring under severe competitive handicaps. A significant portion of their housing stock was in structures with little market appeal for the rising middle classes: e.g., small apartment buildings and two-family houses. In addition, these neighborhoods are either inadequately equipped with, or devoid of, those environmental amenities which might reasonably be considered as part of the middle class standard or urban life in the world's most affluent society. They are, for example, decidely inhospitable to automobile ownership and decidedly less than generous with respect to open space and recreational opportunities.

4. Between 1940 and 1968, a period in which the city's overall population remained virtually unchanged, the combined share of Negroes and Puerto Ricans rose from 7 to 31 percent of the total. About 45 percent of the absolute increase of close to 2 million in the size of these two groups during this period represented in-migration, principally from the poorest parts of the rural South and Puerto Rico.

Up until the late 1950s, the population composition of the gray areas themselves was not greatly affected by these massive shifts. For example, as recently as 1960, the Negro-Puerto Rican population of a typical gray area in the West Bronx accounted for less than 5 percent of its total population (whereas in the South Bronx, the comparable figure was closer to 60 percent). But even though the racial and ethnic character of the population in the gray areas had not as yet been altered, preceding trends had already affected it in some very deep ways, in effect setting the stage for the subsequent transition. What had been happening was that the white population in the gray areas had been declining in an absolute sense. This decline mostly represented a thinning out process which was reflected in the decreasing average size of the area's households. Structures which had once provided housing for families with children were increasingly coming to be occupied only by older married couples (or widows) whose children had grown up and moved away. The gray areas did not prove to be attractive to younger white families. This being the case, once the older households began to pass away, gray area housing became available for the first time to minority group families.

5. While the demand for gray area housing stock on the part of white middle income families has declined, it has increased on the part of lower middle income black and Puerto Rican families who are just beginning to make it from an economic point of view. The latte have undoubtedly been attracted t gray areas by the promise of bette housing. And there is little ques tion that their new situation repre sents a considerable improvemen over the housing they have le behind in such places as Harlem and the South Bronx.

In many ways, this group con stitutes a captive market for gra area housing. It cannot affor unsubsidized new apartment hous construction of the sort that take place in the sound areas. Further more, the amount of subsidize construction that can feasibly b made available to them is very lim ited in relation to the potentia market. Finally, their opportunitie to suburbanize are severely limited both by racial discrimination and by the fact that the costs of sub urbanization have been rising fa more rapidly than the incomes o

Consequently, the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 starts by declaring that "Congress finds that this (194
goal has not been fully realized for many of the Nation's lower-income families, that this is a matter of grave national
concern; and that there exist in the public and private sectors of the economy the resources and capabilities necessar
to the full realization of this goal." The 1968 act further states that "Congress reaffirms this national housing goal and
determines that it can be substantially achieved within the next decade by the construction or rehabilitation of twenty-s
million housing units, six million of these for low and moderate income families. . . ."

ower middle class groups. In short, Puerto Ricans and Negroes who are ow entering the lower portions of he middle class income distribu- ion are being confronted by much nore limited options with respect o improving their standards of ousing consumption than their redecessors.

. At the same time, there is still, n New York City, a substantial umber of lower middle class white milies whose housing options ave also been dangerously nar- owed by these tendencies. The sit- ation is shaping up in which these wo groups, in an era of charged cial tensions, are contending with ach other for an increasingly scarce esource: well-maintained, moder- te-cost housing in sound neighbor- oods. In view of this, the need to everse the trend in the gray areas ust be viewed as matter of great- st importance. What can be done?

. To begin with, in specific terms, hat is meant by "reviving the gray reas?" The actual gray area hous- ng stock must be considered in asically good condition, with rea- onable levels of maintenance; the uildings should be sound for close o two centuries, and they are now ess than fifty years old on the aver- ge. As far as the individual apart- nents are concerned, these too seem asically sound in their critical haracteristics; average room sizes, partment layouts, provisions for ight and air circulation. Where hese buildings and apartments do eed improvement and moderniza- ion is in their plumbing and wir- ng systems and in their kitchens nd bathrooms. The lack of eleva- ors in the five story walkups is also problem but there is no reason to believe that this could not be over- come by innovative design, and in a manner which is compatible with the rent-paying abilities of their oc- cupants. All in all, rehabilitation along the lines sketched in above could be produced at an average cost of around $5,000 for a two- bedrom unit (not including the cost of acquisition), a figure which could probably be considerably re- duced if rehabilitation were carried out on an extensive scale. Undoubt- edly, this level of cost will need to be reflected in the revenues derived from rehabilitation property. But leaving aside for the moment the question of how these added costs can be financed, the point can still be made with little fear of contra- diction that the end product will still be an apartment which is cheaper to produce than equivalent quality new construction.

In addition, the area's infrastruc- ture would have to be modernized if only to create more open space for its residents *and* more parking space for their cars. And the entire process – rehabilitation of housing and modernization of the infra- structure – would have to be car- ried out comprehensively or not at all, which probably means at the scale of a city block at a time. Ad- mittedly, this is hardly a modest proposition. Yet, the alternatives are either nonexistent or appalling. For unless something is undertaken on this ambitious scale the gray areas will surely become slums, and not in a comforting 25 years hence, but more likely five years from now.

8. But who is to carry out such an undertaking? At the present time, the typical gray area constitutes a sort of no-man's land. On the one hand, it has gone far enough downhill to repel new private in- vestment. On the other hand, it has not deteriorated far enough to warrant the intervention on any appreciable scale of the municipal public sector. Moreover, at this point, one might with a good deal of justification be quite skeptical of the ultimate value of the municipal embrace. After all, bureaucratic success is not necessarily measured in terms of such sensible goals as better housed citizens, better com- munities, better educated children, but rather in the degree to which self-imposed processes are adhered to.

In any case, the municipal agen- cies concerned with such matters have studiously avoided any con- frontation with the gray area prob- lem. This avoidance partly reflects the fact the city has enough on its plate in trying to cope with the more immediately pressing prob- lems presented in the slum areas. It is true, of course, that some attention has been paid to the gray areas and some programs have been developed to deal with the perceived problems. But the extant programs of this kind are really only piecemeal exercises in image- striking and cannot be taken seri- ously.

There is every indication, in fact, that current trends in the develop- ment of the gray areas are irrever- sible under the existing institution- al arrangements for maintaining their residential real estate. Indeed, the existing arrangements are re- sponsible, in no small measure, for bringing about the problems that currently beset these areas. Their failure and prospective breakdown are not due to any personal dere- liction on the part of the existin management. Rather it reflects th impact of more basic condition among them the low rate of retur that can be earned on such pro erties relative to other investment the drastic shortening in the i vestment horizons of gray area re estate people; and the drying u of sources of mortgage financi (a tendency which is quite ind pendent of the stringencies induce by the current inflation). The point then, is that any program put for ward to deal with gray area prob lems that does not also attempt t significantly change the system u der which it is owned, finance and managed is going to fail.

9. There are no known successfu models available so far as develo ing a housing policy – and appr priate policy instrument – for sit ations such as those presented b the gray areas. Undoubtedly, a program mix developed for such a area would inevitably have to i clude rehabilitation, building cod enforcement, spot clearance, expa ded and improved municipal ser ices, loans from public agencies below market interest rates, re supplements. But the effects of thes measures although certainly sal tary in themselves are not likely t go far enough. A decayed (or deca ing) neighborhood can be temp rarily renewed by public investme in rebuilding and rehabilitatio in the process some obsolete desig features can be permanently a tered for the better. But few suc physical improvements will endu or even much matter unless th inhabitants of the neighborhoo and its property-owners are fina cially able and willing to maintai

hem and to secure the continuing
operation of municipal govern-
ent in doing so.

Thus, the cornerstone of an alter-
ative management system should
e programs involving greater ten-
nt and community participation
d control and these should be
rried out by a broadly-based com-
unity organization. This strategy,
successful, should involve the res-
ents themselves in the manage-
ent of their housing as resources
r their own betterment. An even-
al result of such efforts would
rely be more comfortable and
ttractive housing, cleaner and
ore orderly neighborhoods. But
is would only come as the resi-
ents acquire the means and devel-
the interest and political influ-
nce to maintain these amenities.
he programs to be pursued by
e community-based group might
clude the development of main-
enance corporations, the organi-
tion of cooperatives and tenant-
anaged rental properties, the en-
uragement of owner-occupancy in
ulti-unit structures, and commun-
y participation in neighborhood
provement programs.

A community group whose basic
unctions would include owning
nd managing housing in its area
ould provide a powerful self-
volved grass-roots pressure group
cting upon behalf of its neigh-
orhood. Its direct stake in the via-
ility of the community would be
rong and obvious and, what is
portant, could be expressed in
nancial terms. An organization of
is type, involving the commun-
y and community people, would
epresent an attempt to create in
eas of apartment-house living a
ehicle for articulating the kind of
lf-interest that is so effective in
aintaining the quality of single-
mily home areas. Such an organ-
ation could also be used as an
stitution to influence community
ction in such areas as police pro-
ction, education, sanitation serv-
es, and recreational facilities, and
to build other institutions that can meet needs in the community. Buying clubs, credit unions, and child-care centers are examples of the kinds of things which people can begin and operate themselves once they have experience in developing institutions.

10. The creation of such an organization could have a number of other important side effects as well. It would act to neutralize or reverse the unfavorable image that gray areas have gotten from the point of view of attracting mortgage money and insurance. This by itself would improve the gray area outlook considerably. In fact, the

organization would be the logical conduit for receiving funds and mortgage money for rehabilitation purposes and new construction. It could also, by its positive actions, encourage the gray area private sector to act in a more forthcoming manner than it has been doing in matters of property maintenance and improvement.

Finally, rehabilitation along with housing maintenance and management could become, with proper organization, major sources of employment and income in New York City. Up until now, this development has been kept well below its full potential, and conducted on a small-scale handcraft basis. The major considerations which seemingly motivate the suppliers of these services both on the management and on the union side are those of output restriction, reduction in competition (through controls on entry of new firms or on the enlargement of the work force) and, inevitably, price increases based on semi-monopolistic practices. If this logjam is to be broken, the only way for it to happen will be by the creation of new organizations which are created for the specific purpose of providing such services on a large and efficient scale. This logically could be the function of the community-based housing groups (or of a consortium of them). To do this, they would not only have to provide the services involved on a business basis, but also to develop the training programs designed to locate an appropriate and sizeable enough work force, whose skills would range from porters to skilled craftsmen (electricians, plumbers, etc.) to real estate finance and management.

11. Ultimately, the financing of community-based groups whose activities have been sketched above would have to be derived from their operating activities in the form of management fees, operating incomes from rents, etc. But realistically speaking, one cannot expect such an organization to come into being spontaneously or to be in a position to finance its operations during an organizational period. Outside financing and expertise will certainly be needed both to bring the community organization structure into existence and to develop a range of specific feasible programs and policies for this action agency to implement. The details of the program will have to be worked out separately for each gray area. The critical question is how to get this initial organizational period launched in a credible manner. One of the many problems of the gray areas is their lack of sophisticated leadership with access to outside money or expertise. In New York City power and wealth have always been concentrated in downtown Manhattan, while the gray areas were built as dormitories to house the city's hewers of wood and drawers of water. It will take some doing even to partly redress this state of affairs but it would certainly constitute an appropriate subject for the city's power structure to think about. One suggestion might be to create a nonprofit Gray Areas Development Corporation which would be outside of established governmental channels. This development corporation, whose board of directors would include representatives from the city's universities, foundations, business groups and municipal agencies, would in turn act as a source of seed money and expertise in the period of initial development of the community-based groups. *Emanuel Tobier*

Emanuel Tobier is associate professor of economics at Queens College, City University of New York, and consultant to New York University's study of the Bronx.

According to the official national goal, every American household which does not enjoy "a decent home and a suitabl environment" is part of the housing problem. Unfortunately, this statement utterly fails to convey the appalling living conditions which give the housing problem such over-riding urgency to millions of poor Americans. In fact, most Americans have no conception of the filth, degradation, squalor, overcrowding, and personal danger and insecurity which millions of inadequate housing units are causing in both our cities and rural areas. Thousands of infants are attacked by rats each year; hundreds die or become mentally retarded from eating lead paint that falls off cracked walls thousands more are ill because of unsanitary conditions resulting from jamming large families into a single room, continuing failure of landlords to repair plumbing or provide proper heat, and pitifully inadequate storage space. Until you have actually stumbled through the ill-lit and decaying rooms of a slum dwelling, smelled the stench of sewage an garbage and dead rats behind the walls, seen the roaches and crumbling plaster and incredibly filthy bathrooms, and recoiled from exposed wiring and rotting floorboards and staircases, you have no real idea of what bad housing is like These miserable conditions are not true of all inadequate housing units, but enough Americans are trapped in the hopeless desolation of such surroundings to constitute both a scandal and a serious economic and social drag in our affluent society.

Housing in America

In housing, employment and life style, the 10,000 to 12,000 Sioux on the Pine Ridge (N.D.) Reservation are still untouched by the benevolence of Washington. A few families are living in abandoned auto bodies. Some families live in tents, some in abandoned chicken coops. Many families (possibly as many as 50 per cent, conservative observers say) will spend this winter and the rest of their lives in miniscule huts with dirt floors. At least 75 per cent of the dwellings on this reservation have no plumbing. . . .

When the military establishment at Igloo, S. D., closed down, it wiped out the town, and a few of the small frame buildings were shipped to the reservation and sold to the Indians for houses. Sally Little Flower (that isn't her real name), her husband and nine children moved into one of them. It was quite a step up from her previous home, which was 9 by 12 feet in floor span — about the size of an ordinary living room rug. In that box of a home they had slept and eaten — except in the summer, when the children slept in two car hulls outside. In the winter the nine children slept on the floor.

In their previous home, Sally's family bathed one at a time; and when that one person was bathing, the other ten persons stayed outside to permit some privacy. In their new home, despite its small size (too small to permit all to eat at one sitting even if they use the kitchen and living room for it), there is a bathroom. The only trouble is: there is no plumbing. The U. S. Public Health Service has the responsibility for installing the plumbing in reservation homes, and for two years it has claimed that it lacked the money to install the pipes. Robert Sherrill, *The Nation*

The Satanic Mill

Pruitt-Igoe: Down Long Flights of Dark Stairs

The notion that anything was fundamentally wrong with the design of public housing in this country has not readily been accepted. Critics for years have been assailing the architecture of housing projects for its sterility, its massive oppressiveness and, increasingly, for its failure to serve the social needs of its client population. But the public housing establishment — that network of "lenders, builders, and public housers" — has tenaciously resisted reform. The housing policymakers have bureaucratically brushed aside any suggestions that their design and planning concepts were in error.

Moreover, they found allies outside the establishment — union leaders, city planners, politicians and others — who, like the public housers themselves, interpreted any criticism of housing programs or projects as an attack upon the very idea of government-subsidized housing for the poor.

Now, however, much of what the critics asserted is beginning to be acknowledged. A housing conference in 1966 heard a federal official declare the Public Housing Authority was reassessing fundamental policies; it was reconsidering its basic concept of building large projects. After 25 years experience, the official declared, the authority was recommending "scattered sites, vest pocket projects, and economically-integrated joint private-public ventures" — all of which the critics had long been urging.

These belated changes in policies are not due merely to the efforts of the critics. Rather it appears to be more in response to the reactions of those who were originally intended to be the consumers of public housing, the economically disadvantaged groups in the nation's slums and racial ghettos. The arguments of the critics could be ignored, but when the residents of housing projects themselves could be seen and heard describing the places where they lived as 'new slums', 'highrise slums', and 'concrete ghettos', it became impossible to deny that public housing had at least failed them.

Of course not all projects have been unsuccessful; there are thousands of satisfied dwellers in public housing. Nor is the architecture of public housing solely responsible for its deficiencies — the political and financial obstacles are many and complex. But the planners and designers have been slow to learn from experience. Long after some prototype had shown signs of malfunction, project after project was turned out in the nearly identical mold as the public housers continued to deny the existence of any special problems. Serious reevaluation of planning and design approaches finally occurred because some housing projects proved such glaring failures as to become public scandals.

The Pruitt-Igoe project in St. Louis is one such example, a failure of such monumental proportions that its own tenants have we described it as "a classic in the annals of public housing." A complex of 33 slab-like buildings, each 11 stories high, stretching in parallel rows across a 57-acre site Pruitt-Igoe won high praise for the design of its buildings and plan for its site even before it was built in 1954. *Architectural Forum*, in its April 1951 issue, acclaimed for setting new standards of design Later it received an architectural award for excellence from the American Institute of Architects the top professional society. But 10 years after its completion more than a quarter of its 2,800 apartments lay vacant and Pruitt-Igoe had become a scene of such social disorder and physical squalor that a sociologist said its name had become "a household term for the worst in ghetto living."

Accordingly, in 1965, Pruitt-Igoe tenants banded together, won funding from the Urban League and OEO, and conducted their own study of the project. Their report was presented to the Senate's Ribicoff

Committee in 1966 by Dr. Lee Rainwater who also offered the findings of his own Pruitt-Igoe study which was funded by the National Institutes of Mental Health. Dr. Rainwater's report and findings have received considerable attention but the tenants' report has been rather neglected. Yet if planners and architects are seriously interested in finding out what went wrong in Pruitt-Igoe, surely the residents' viewpoints and their account of the project's problems should prove helpful.

The tenants report is in fact a remarkable document. It is a persuasive rebuttal to those overzealous public housers who dismissed reports of project disorders as ill-motivated or ill-informed. At the same time, it is eloquent testimony to the resourcefulness, the intelligence, the vigor and the humanity of the Pruitt-Igoe residents. But most importantly for the designer of housing for the disadvantaged, it illustrates vividly the weaknesses underlying the design philosophy of Pruitt-Igoe's architects, however well-intentioned they might have been.

Especially illuminating are the tenants' reactions, as described in the report, to those architectural elements so highly – if prematurely – praised by the professionals. The open spaces under the buildings, the elevator designed to stop only at every third floor to economize on space and money, the stairwell arrangement off the elevator floors leading to the apartments on the adjacent floors, the gallery corridors meant to have multiple uses as a playground, a porch, a laundry room and a storage area – all these worked in radically different manner from the way the architects had envisioned, as the following excerpts from the tenants' report demonstrate:

> Pruit-Igoe from without looks like a disaster area. Broken windows are apparent in every building. . . . As the visitor nears the entrance to a building, the filth and debris intensify. Abandoned rooms under the building are the open receptacles for all manner of waste. Mica, roaches, and other vermin thrive in these open areas . . . lights have been taken out. . . . It takes little imagination to conceive of the dangers which may lurk in these darkened filthy rooms.
>
> The infamous skip-stop Pruitt-Igoe elevator is a revelation. . . . Paint has peeled off the elevator walls. The stench of urine is overwhelming. . . . The floors, victims of innumerable assaults by humans, furniture, and the mop, are almost unbelievably nasty and filthy.
>
> When the vistitor finally emerges from the dark stench-filled elevator on to one of the building's gallery floors, he enters a grey concrete world reminiscent of the worst nineteenth century caricature of an insane asylum. Institutional grey walls give way to institutional grey floors. Rusty, institutional type screens cover windows in which no glass exists. Radiators, once used to heat these public galleries, have been, in many buildings, stripped from the walls. Incinerators, too small to accommodate the quantity of refuse placed in them, have spilled over — trash and garbage are heaped on the floor. Light bulbs and fixtures are out, bare hot wire often dangles from malfunctioning light sockets.
>
> The stairways . . . are dark and dirty. The odor of decaying garbage is overpowering. . . .
>
> The conditions which are endured by the residents of Pruitt-Igoe are unendurable; that any child — or adult — emerges from this environment relatively unscathed is the most remarkable fact about this concrete ghetto.

Admittedly, not all of Pruitt-Igoe's woes stem from its architectural features—an admission which the tenants' report repeatedly makes. But, while the economic, social, and political factors which handicap low-income and minority groups are acknowledged, the tenants still severely fault the physical design and planning of Pruitt-Igoe from a social viewpoint. The lack of recreational facilities is particularly criticized: only two asphalt playgrounds with rusty inadequate equipment for the more than 5,000 youngsters, no places for adults to socialize, little else in the way of community facilities, no mail drop in an area the size of 30 city blocks. Pruitt-Igoe has no schools, no health center, no churches, no cultural facilities, no retail services, no shops, no grocery stores, no restaurants, no bakeries, no barber or hairdresser shops, no drug stores, no taverns. In sum, most of the services needed for the healthy functioning of a community of 12,000 persons were overlooked. The tenants' report indicates this lack of facilities but does not emphasize it. It should have, perhaps, but the significant point to be noted here is that the report, as it stands, is probably the most thorough analysis of the design deficiencies of this project that has appeared to date. (Professionals, on the other hand, recalling the glowing notices Pruitt-Igoe received years ago, still ask to see the site. When confronted with the shocking conditions of the community galleries, the professionals attribute it to a breakdown of management or of behavior rather than to a failure of design. The reaction of the chief architect of Pruitt-Igoe is notable in this regard. Referring to the misuse of communal spaces *Architectural Forum* quoted him as saying: "I never thought people were this destructive. As an architect, I doubt if I would think about it now. I suppose we should have quit the job. It's a job I wish I hadn't done." This architect, it might be noted, is now the designer of the World Trade Center in Manhattan.)

Throughout the country, in fact in those communities where residents have been given a voice in the shaping of housing plans for their neighborhoods, tenants are expressing their complaints with a sense of urgency, and clarity, that didn't exist before.

In Hartford, Conn., for instance the residents of the South Arsenal (see page 20) asked that none of their new housing be higher than three or four stories. Because of the need for open space, the residents agreed to compromise but they in

Slums and Social Insecurity

Something must be said about the suitability of high-rise, multifamily dwellings for family living. Middleclass families may live in such dwellings by choice; poor families are likely to have no alternative. It has been extensively observed that mothers cannot supervise their young children from the 8th or 10th story of an apartment house, and so turn them loose. (The phenomenon is also extensively unstudied. The only study available suggests 4 years of age as a turning point, after which children are more readily allowed outside without supervision. This is a significant finding—if further study would confirm it and if the effects on children were carefully observed. Mothers themselves say that large apartment houses make it difficult to manage their children.

High-rise housing may, on the other hand, be eminently suitable for childless couples, for single individuals and the aged. A recent study in Baltimore, speculates that the basic design should receive credit for a high degree of neighborly activity in an 11-story building. The building had no inside corridors; apartments were connected by an outside screened corridor intended to discourage loitering by teenagers. Apparently, a design that discouraged some, served others. The point is important. Apartment buildings are criticized not only for their rise but for thoughtless design. The later may be avoidable. For example, Elizabeth Wood criticizes design intended —

> . . . to minimize or prevent accidental communication between people and the informal gathering of people. . . ."

She says, "It seems to be an urban fact that boys and girls must loiter: girls with girls, to see if they can see boys; boys with boys, to see if they can see girls; boys with girls for geenral purposes.

High-rise buildings continue to be built to house families with children, partly because land in the center of cities is expensive and partly because sites for public housing are becoming increasingly hard to find. If it is important that mothers — who cannot afford maids — supervise their children, some alternative will have to be found to housing them in large apartment buildings. *Alvin L. Schorr*

Excerpted from *Slums and Social Insecurity* (U.S. Government Printing Office).

Most experts measure inadequate housing by using the data for "substandard housing units" published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. These include all units that are physically dilapidated and all that do not have hot water and full plumbing within the unit, regardless of physical condition. The number of such units has been declining in recent years but is still very large.

Year	*All housing units (millions)*	*Substandard units (millions)*	*Percent substandard*
1950	46.1	17.0	36.9
1960	58.5	11.4	19.5
1970 (estimated)	69.5	6.9	9.9

In the two decades from 1950 to 1970, the nation will have built 30 million new units, eliminated 10.1 million substandard units, and expanded the net supply of standard units by 80.7 percent (as compared with a 35 percent rise in population). But there will still be almost 7 million substandard units. Moreover, counting only substandard units as inadequate seriously understates the true severity of the problem. If we also consider all overcrowded housing inadequate (that is, all units with more than 1.0 occupant per room), then an additional 3.9 million units would be part of the housing problem by 1970.

isted that no more than 30 per ent of the new units be above the ourth floor. Similarly in the South *nd of Boston, the residents re-* ected a plan to construct most of he new housing as highrise towers. hey advocated, instead, reducing he number of new units needed y saving old units marked for demolition, and scattering the new housing throughout the area and blending the design in with the existing, lower, buildings.

In Chicago, the Woodlawn community gave two stipulations to the architects of its housing: no elevators and no long corridors. In Greenwich Village, a community group is fighting for its own housing plan which features buildings only five stories with duplex apartments occupying the top two floors.

A survey of Bedford-Stuyvesant, which the Center for Urban Education helped conduct for the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, revealed comparable attitudes. Of the 3,000 household heads interviewed, more than three quarters voiced a preference for living in the lower-type building. The desire for living in a small-sized project, that is one with fewer families housed in it, was even greater—more than 80 per cent expressed a preference for the development similar to the vest pocket concept. These preferences, interestingly enough, were just as strong among the residents of public housing which, in Bedford-Stuyvesant, *consists mainly of highrise structures* and clusters of hundreds or thousands of families.

This dislike of highrise buildings and huge developments is sometimes discounted by advocates of public housing, but that it is widespread cannot be denied. That this dislike may have a rational and functional basis—particularly for low-income families with children—can be illustrated by two projects in New York City, the First Houses and the Harlem River Houses. Both of these developments have been cited as successful examples of public housing. Oddly enough both are comprised of walkups of four and five stories, and, compared to other projects, small numbers of families. The layout and overall plans for each are similar—modest buildings grouped around interior courts which contain pleasantly designed playgrounds or recreational areas. In both these projects visitors have noted a sense of concern and community, a friendlier environment, not observed in other newer, larger projects. Some time ago, on a visit to First Houses, this writer talked with the caretaker about his work. He had been employed by the Housing Authority in various places—including the modern high-rise projects. His favorite was First Houses. Why? Because there was no vandalism there. He explained *how at First Houses he knew the* children and the families better. Both he and the parents could watch the youngsters more closely.

In contrast, the Pruitt-Igoe report has these grim observations to make on the behavior of its young:

> Many adult tenants complain about the 'wild' children who roam the halls of the buildings, break windows, rollerskate on the concrete floors, dance under the buildings, and curse, gamble, and threaten others. Given the lack of facilities within the area — and this is especially critical for the very young for they cannot travel great distances seeking entertainment — one wonders what else there is for these normally emotionally healthy children to do?
>
> Within the buildings there is no place for the youngsters to play except on the . . . galleries. . . . Since most gallery windows are out . . . several tragedies have resulted. Boys and girls have fallen out of the windows, down the elevator shafts or down long flights of dark stairs.

In the five years since the tenants issued their report, conditions at Pruitt-Igoe have worsened despite the expenditure of substantial sums for repair and rehabilitation. Vacancies are reported to have soared to well over 50 percent; in fact, housing officials are considering tearing down the entire complex.

In 1969, after a rent strike had spread throughout the city's projects, two public housing residents *were appointed to the St. Louis* board of housing commissioners. It was questionable then whether this belated recognition of the need for tenant participation in project management could significantly improve the social climate at Pruitt-Igoe. The continued deterioration there indicates this step by itself was ineffective.

Pruitt-Igoe tragically emphasizes that in the design of housing for the poor, social and psychological factors are more important than purely esthetic ones. This is not to say public housing should ignore good design—indeed an attractive appearance might be considered a psychological need. But it is to say that the suitability of the project plan and design to the social patterns of the people living in the house takes precedence over superficial esthetic elements.

Furthermore, the failure of Pruitt-Igoe demonstrates that no project, no matter how strong or handsome its buildings are, can shield its occupants from the destructive, dehumanizing effects of poverty and discrimination.

Al McGrath

Al McGrath is a researcher in community planning and the design of multiple housing.

Experts and Expertise
The Housing Project as School

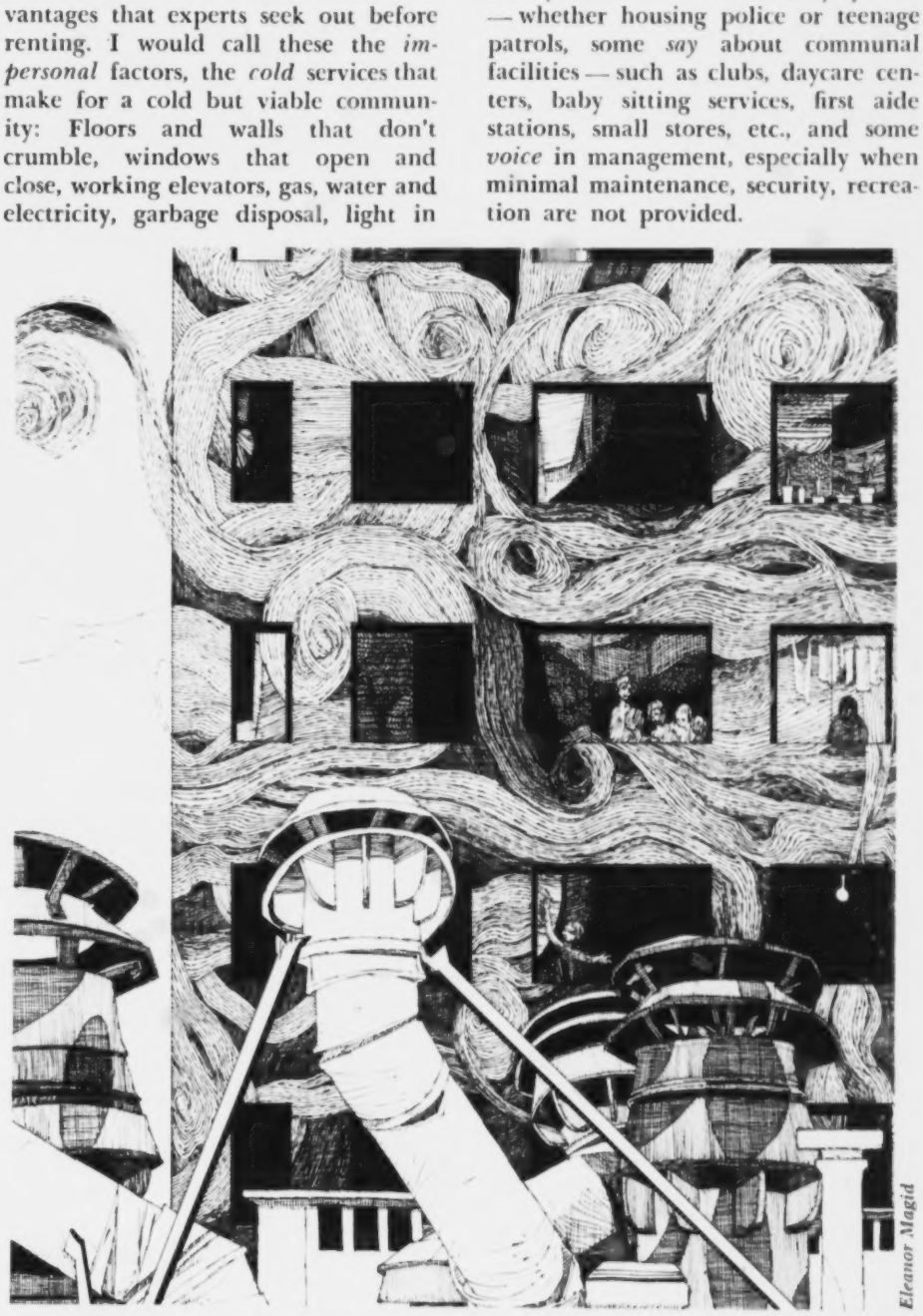
The 1960s will be remembered as a bad decade for the old-style expert: military experts discredited in Vietnam one after another, school experts proven incompetent at educating children, public housing going bankrupt in ten cities in spite of an army of housing experts. Before the new decade, I ask myself: how can we avoid the old mistakes?

Housing provides some clues. It shows how the old-style expert operates: he uses his superior training to sell the Public Housing Authority on his personal taste (for lawns, high rises, whatever); he uses his vast know-how to exclude (rather than include) informed people such as assistant housing managers, from design decisions; he uses his reputation with other experts to cushion failures (such as housing that won't work).

Only when the cost of maintaining housing jumps, and rent increases cause rent strikes, does it become clear who the *real* client is. He is not the public housing official. He is the tenant, who was a teenager in the neighborhood when plans were on the drawing table, and who may have lived under a succession of housing managers, and whose children vandalize the property daily, but whose opinion has seldom, if ever, been asked by any expert about anything.

The literature on the subject makes clear the tenants' objections to highrise, but the point is the expert likes them because he has the necessary skills for highrise living: He can supervise a doorman so that drunks, salesmen, bill collectors, burglars, addicts and other unwanted visitors are turned away consistently; he can be quick to complain about noise, unruly children and other intrusions; if management does not process complaints or make repairs, he can fight management at city hall; arrange a country retreat where he can recuperate weekends for the weekday struggle; he can fight for an adequate education for his children — plus recreational facilities so they don't have to use the courtyard downstairs; he can fight for an active social life, so he's not completely dependent on family and neighbors for emotional supports; he can fight for a career that leads, step by step, to some kind of financial equity or power in the system; then if he loses his fight with city agencies, management and other irritants, take his rent money and move to another high rise, or if necessary, to that country retreat.

New public housing, on the other hand, once offered these same advantages that experts seek out before renting. I would call these the *impersonal* factors, the *cold* services that make for a cold but viable community: Floors and walls that don't crumble, windows that open and close, working elevators, gas, water and electricity, garbage disposal, light in the hallways, boilers protected from vandals, laundry rooms.



Eleanor Magid

But my guess is that no amount of "cold" service can make a viable community in old public housing high rises. Some tenants tell me that an entirely different set of needs come first. These I call "warm" or interpersonal services: Maintenance *jobs* in the projects that put money into the pockets of tenants, some *say* about how money is to be spent on grounds and, in particular, on recreation, some *organization* in dealing with problems like employment, health, schooling, a *communications* system to put uprooted families in touch with those neighboring families, or services that could give immediate support (plus ways to move such families closer to each other), some *choice* in security systems — whether housing police or teenage patrols, some *say* about communal facilities — such as clubs, daycare centers, baby sitting services, first aide stations, small stores, etc., and some *voice* in management, especially when minimal maintenance, security, recreation are not provided.

My guess is that the well-known anger expressed by teenage vandals against public housing stems from a lack of these warm services, from a lack of a community *defined by the tenants themselves.* My guess is that parents too are angry enough to suspect any program proposed — except the most radical. And the most radical would be to transfer ownership of housing, or management (or both) into the hands of those who have to live in it.

Rich people do this regularly when management disappoints them. They seize privately owned buildings and turn them into cooperatives — by *buying* them. Poor people cannot use this strategy; consequently, they are turning their bulldings into cooperatives by *demolishing* them — very slowly. Cinder block by cinder block, window by window, and wire by wire, billions of dollars of housing are depreciating at the same time that old-style experts plan more of the same and build it at prescribed rates and costs-per-unit.

On the other hand, our rickety electronic culture is an education in itself. *Any* impact on our culture we can make is enlightening. It shows us exactly those skills we need to learn — in order to survive and warm ourselves. Perhaps, therefore, the billions-of-dollars-worth of public housing can be saved for our culture — if the old-style experts: recognize the tenant as the client; teach him what they know; live with the failure, until they too learn to find success.

In addition I suspect we'll need new-style experts — people of whatever color or class who can *enable* tenants to become effective in spite of the handicaps of poverty. We'll need committee chairmen and directors of recreation and trainers who can train new chairmen and directors.

The new-style expert will know how to bend old-style expertise together with local demands until they fit under the roof of the law — for instance, state guidelines for cooperative housing. He'll also know how the law can be changed and how training designs can be made to work. He'll help co-operators (and strong tenant councils) take care of business — in maintenance, fiscal policy, communications (the old cooperative committees) as well as in recreation, security, man-power (the new ones).

Why shouldn't tenants learn to create their own services and institutions — some as volunteers, others as paid employees gradually filling vacancies on union rosters?

And why shouldn't Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis or Alfred E. Smith Houses in New York confer a certificate of Applied City Skills on those who will chair the committees, set up the police, edit the newspapers, run the day care centers, collect the rents and handle the grievances of these giant societies.

By 1980, why shouldn't the housing project itself become a school?

David Shepherd

David Shepherd is coordinator of Community Makers, a New York firm that helps community people start community institutions, such as small businesses, educational game centers, theater, and training programs.

Even more important, measuring inadequate housing only by the number of substandard housing units focuses solely upon the housing unit itself. **But housing broadly defined includes three basic ingredients: a physical dwelling unit, its inhabitants and their behavior toward the unit, and the surrounding environment.** Thus, improvements in physical dwelling units cannot be considered in isolation: they must be linked to changes in occupant behavior and to overall environmental upgrading if the housing problem is to be truly solved.

Opening Suburbia

Place Prosperity vs. People Prosperity

One of the bits of received wisdom traditional planners have made part of their professional baggage is the assumption that place prosperity should take precedence over people prosperity in the process of urban development (i.e., the rehabilitation of deteriorating neighborhoods is a more significant policy objective than the establishment of effective mobility among the residents of these neighborhoods). It is this viewpoint that lies behind efforts to encourage industry to locate in the central city and forego the fiscal and spatial advantages of suburban locations; it is this viewpoint that sustains manpower programs which ignore suburban job growth and concentrate on finding jobs in the central city for unemployed and underemployed workers; and it is this viewpoint that lies behind the attempt to rebuild the central city housing stock instead of building a new housing stock on vacant land in the fast growing suburbs.

The practical difficulty with such programs is that they show no understanding of the dynamics of urban growth, no appreciation of the forces propelling the decentralization of people and jobs in urban areas, and no sense of the implications of the decentralization process for members of working class and minority groups who still live in the central cities.

Consider, for example, the following statistics: Between 1950 and 1966, 80 to 85 percent of all the new jobs created in the nation's large metropolitan areas, and 100 percent of all the new blue collar jobs, were located outside of central cities. These central cities actually experienced a net loss of more than a million jobs, along with a loss of two million blue collar jobs.

At the same time population of the nation's central cities increased by 7,400,000 while population of their surrounding suburbs increased by 36,500,000. By 1966 more Americans lived outside central cities in our urban areas than inside and this trend is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

While this process of dispersal took place, the cities experienced a major influx of black and Puerto Rican families, who found many of the high-paying blue collar jobs they were looking for had disappeared, relocated to the suburbs. Moreover, the suburban communities to which these blue collar jobs moved, while welcoming new tax-paying industrial facilities, have refused to permit development of their land supply for worker housing. Black and Puerto Rican workers, in particular, have been unable to follow these jobs to the suburbs. Hence, they have been piling up in the central cities without jobs, without access to jobs, without access to information about new job openings in the suburbs, without decent housing, and without any prospect of improving their condition by further migration. At the same time, as if to mock the policies that have led to the current impasse, many thousands of suburban job openings go unfilled for lack of adequate manpower.

It seems clear, then, those who seek to rebuild the run-down areas of central cities through private investment are seeking to bring about nothing less than a reversal in the direction of American economic life. Yet such an objective must surely fail given the present context of that life. By concentrating exclusively upon central city redevelopment, and leaving to state and local government control over the use of developable land in the suburbs, proponents of redevelopment and their allies in government are permitting the market rather than public policy to determine the allocation of future urban space.

What is needed, now, in my view, is a general statement that defines more positively the nature of the urban crisis, and that suggests a strategy appropriate to that definition. Thus, I would argue that, essentially, the housing crisis is the result of the widespread unavailability of land in urban areas for development of housing and related public and private facilities — to accommodate population growth, to permit the abandonment of substandard housing, and to provide for effective inter- and intra-urban mobility. But since the shortage of residential land occurs in a context in which 90 per cent of the nation's land base is undeveloped, and in which additional land is constantly being made available as a result of the depopulation of the countryside, it is not so much a matter of the absence of vacant land in the nation as a whole, o

Land: A Community Trust

The following, taken with permission from the Cambridge Institute bulletin No. 2 on community-based economic development, is excerpted from a discussion about community development coorporations. The speaker is Charles Sherrod, president, New Communities, Inc., Albany, Ga.

New Communities is an organization incorporated to hold land in trust. The idea is to develop in the rural community a viable economy, a viable life, in a way a different life style than we have in our country today. In other words, instead of a man living for himself, he lives for others. Now that sounds very up in the air. It sounds religious even. But there are some folks who are talking brothers and sisters, but they aren't acting brothers and sisters. We are starting to move that way but when it comes to acting it out as far as money is concerned then have mercy, have mercy. "I want my money," they say. "It's mine. Don't bother my dollar bill down there. I worked hard for it and it's mine." Somehow, if we're going to make a better life for our people—which is the idea we have —we're going to have to make a better life for 'us' and not for 'me.' There ain't no other way, brother, there ain't no other way.

Another point: we feel that power, all power, ensues from the land. He who holds the land, holds the power. You can burn bricks, even steel can be melted. But you've never heard anyone destroying the earth (except maybe some crazy folk who developed the hydrogen bomb. *They* may be able to destroy land, but I don't know that they want to do that, yet). So the basic idea behind the project is specifically that there is a piece of land, 4,800 acres, in Lee County, Georgia, on which 30,000 people can live a better life, and the land is held by one white man. Have mercy, brothers.

The land costs $1.1 million which we don't have and which we are trying to get. We just got a $100,000 planning grant from OEO to plan the project, and we are planning, brothers. We are *planning*. But we can't plan us a life. Grants for planning and not for doing is another one of the problems.

One last point: And that is the problem of our people. How do we fashion a decision-making process which does not have at its roots a mere acquisition for acquisition's sake. In other words, greed.

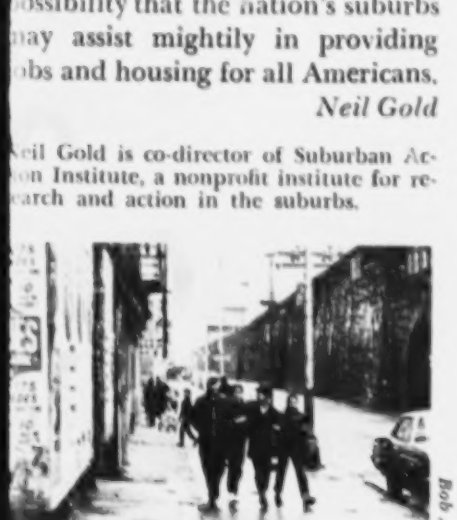
ven in its urban areas, but of the patial imbalances in American economic life which have given rise to lopsided population distribution between urban and rural areas between cities and suburbs.

Seen in this light the urban housing problem can be defined on the one hand as the problem of eliminating unequal access to strategically sited suburban land and resources (which has resulted from the interaction of restrictive government policies and practices that encourage withholding of land from residential development to conserve municipal expenditures), and on the other as the antisocial excesses inherent in the market allocation of urban space. It is this unequal access to suburban land, and to the job markets of the suburbs, on the part of the poor and the black, that is responsible for the geographical and income differences between racial groups in the nation's large metropolitan areas.

If these differences are to be eliminated, it will be necessary that the suburbs of America play a major role in solving problems of race and poverty. This is not to suggest that the suburbs should or could deal with these issues in isolation: clearly the suburbs cannot do it alone. But the land at the fringe of metropolitan areas, and the expanding industrial development in the suburbs, combine to afford the possibility that the nation's suburbs may assist mightily in providing jobs and housing for all Americans.

Neil Gold

Neil Gold is co-director of Suburban Action Institute, a nonprofit institute for research and action in the suburbs.



Bob Adelman

Technology

The High Cost of Building Houses

It is terribly expensive to build houses in this country. A one-family house, which is mostly a box around empty space, costs about the same per square foot (some $20) as would a car if we bought one by the square foot. And yet the car is not only a far more complex and compact object, but its price includes heavy costs for advertising, model changes, and dealerships. One might expect housing to cost half as much, but for a myriad of reasons it does not.

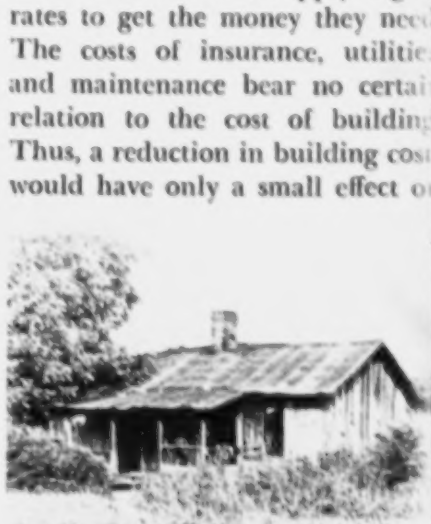
Management is weak and undercapitalized. Most builders are too small to take advantage of economies of scale in production or purchasing. They are too small to invest in research and development, so they keep doing things in the same traditional ways, and make their major decisions either by guesswork or according to fashion. Because of this smallness, and because both market demand and production capital are extremely sensitive to cyclical variations in the economy, many builders go out of business rather easily, and those who endure in the face of these ups and downs cannot invest in capital equipment or maintain a large permanent work force.

Production involves such complexities and ambiguities as only a Kafka might have imagined. Suppliers, contractors, and subcontractors intertwine in various relations of responsibility, timing, and credit, each having to make a heavy allowance in his prices for the risks of delay, unforeseen complications, and possible nonpayment. For instance, a profit may be turned into a loss by expensive stops in production while waiting for an inspector to look at some wiring before closing up a wall. If someone who has built in one town tries to expand by building in another, he may find that the local electric and building codes are different, and he must go through the costly process of identifying these differences and explaining them to his men. But, more importantly, he may run into trouble as an outsider to the tight web of associations (often ethnic) among suppliers, contractors, government officials, and labor.

Of all the major industries, construction is the most plagued by the craft organization of labor. Plasterers may not saw a piece of wood, and carpenters may not move an electric wire. This procedure is certainly inefficient, if only because it complicates things. Whether or not other restrictive practices by unions have slowed down the adoption of efficiency-increasing innovations is a much debated issue, argued mainly by example. Electric power tools, dry wall construction, and paints that go on faster are clear advances. But house building today has an anachronistic quality. It is done by a feudal assemblage of men with complex interlocking duties, rights, and privileges, who put together tens of thousands of parts, most of them quite small and many of which need to be cut or shaped to be the right size. Pieces of wood of peculiar sizes (a 2" x 4" is really 1⅝" x 3⅝") are measured with folding rulers, marked off with pencils, cut, fitted, fixed in place with sharp-pointed pieces of wire driven home one at a time by striking them with a piece of steel attached to a wood handle. Walls are made up of layer upon layer of diverse materials, deployed one after another by men of different trades.

Why cannot such an inefficient process be changed? The reason, in large part, lies in inertia, because the difficulties of labor, management, and institutional restraints make it very difficult to develop and adopt significant innovations. Consider that the cost of a typical house consists in about equal parts of land, labor, materials, and equipment such as stoves and heating units. A major improvement in any element, such as how a floor, roof, or a wall is made, will affect total cost by a few percent at most. Yet to achieve such an improvement in any element may require high-risk learning and conflict situations, and possibly research and development costs which are not recoverable for the small-scale producers. Under these circumstances where any one improvement yields a small advantage, if any at all, and where improvements are difficult, there will be relatively few of them.

The cost of the finished house, however, is only one of the components of the housing cost for the consumer. More important to him than the sales price are the monthly costs of housing, of which the price of the house is only one aspect. The rate of interest paid on the mortgage and the payment period can affect monthly costs far more than sales price, and other expense components are only partly dependent on the cost of the house. Property taxes, for instance, are based on property values, but this value is used to allocate the share of tax load among the residents of the taxing unit so as to bring in enough money to cover the fiscal needs for schools and other government operations. A reduction in the costs of building would not change these needs, and taxing units would have to apply higher rates to get the money they need. The costs of insurance, utilities, and maintenance bear no certain relation to the cost of building. Thus, a reduction in building costs would have only a small effect on



Another complicating factor is that many low-income households live in good quality units with decent surroundings, bu must pay a large proportion of their income for rent or ownership costs. For example, in 1959, 77 percent of all household with incomes under $2,000 paid 35 percent or more of the income for housing. It may be desirable to provide some ssistance to the many households which can afford to live in adequate housing only by spending more than some easonable proportion of their incomes on housing. Careful budgetary studies have shown that this proportion should b bout 25 percent, varying somewhat with income level and household size. Using this definition, at least 12 million hous olds – and perhaps many more – were part of the housing problem in 1966 (including those in substandard units). Finally, American standards of what constitutes "a decent home" and "a suitable environment" are constantly rising, o measuring housing needs by these definitions involves elements of both subjectivity and relativity that make precise ccuracy impossible. Nevertheless, my rough estimate is that from 10 to 12 million households will be considered nadequately housed in 1970 – or about one out of every six or seven U.S. households.

tal housing costs, and this fact lone weakens the pressure for such eduction.

Nonetheless, the importance of owering building costs is very reat. The Kerner Commission de rmined that inadequate housing as one of the principal dissatis ctions of our black population. oing something about this will be ry difficult if costs are not brought own. A dwelling that costs about 20,000 by its very expensiveness owers the priority of housing in omparison to other forms of social ction. For instance, at current in rest rates, the yearly interest costs n such a dwelling, leaving aside ther costs, would train an unem loyed person or feed a large fam y for a year.

In the last few years we have ome to realize another reason for rgency in lowering the costs of onstruction. Because these costs re high, we are producing new ousing only for the middle class. he poor and the vast majority of he working class live in used hous ng which has been handed down he economic ladder as it becomes lder. Aside from issues of the uality of this old housing, the way n which our metropolitan areas row – by expansion at the edges means that the old housing and he poor and the working class eople are at the center. One re ult of this is the massive segrega on in our urban areas, with cen al cities that are increasingly lack and a suburban ring that is almost exclusively white. Those of us who still believe in integration must be distressed by the de facto segregation produced by a housing market based on a downward filtering process. But, integration aside, a critical fact is that jobs in general are steadily being dispersed, particularly the job opportunities of the poor and the working class. The resulting imbalance can only be marginally ameliorated by subsidy programs to bring some industry back to the central cities. We urgently need to make available housing in the suburbs for black and white working people. The filtering process will not do it in time and, in view of the massive political battles that will be precipitated by such a racial and class integration of our suburbs, we cannot anticipate the massive subsidies that would be needed to bring high-cost housing within the economic reach of these people. We need to improve building efficiency to lower the cost of this housing, and we must modify the zoning, building, and subdivision ordinances which, not always unwittingly, have such an exclusionary effect.

The need to reduce building costs may be looked at another way. New housing construction now claims more than 3 percent of our national income. But housing is in a depressed state, as a result of tight credit, and our rate of building is only slightly over half the rate that is estimated to meet our national housing needs with a

relatively slow improvement in housing conditions. At current costs, that estimated rate would claim about 6 percent of national income.

Many housing experts have long thought that prefabrication is the way to lower costs. It would permit scale efficiencies, including assembly line techniques, year-round employment for workers (who now require extra-high wages because their employment is seasonal), rationalization of materials and sizes, capacity for research and development, and so forth. But, in spite of many attempts, prefabrication of conventional housing has remained a minor activity since the first prefabricated houses were brought in ships from England in the early 17th century. There are many reasons for this, including the opposition of the building unions (whose craft structure is threatened), differing building regulations, the conservatism of financial institutions in issuing mortgages, consumer resistance, limited marketing radii because of transportation costs, and insufficient capitalization and man agement capability. Although ther are many prefabricators, a prefab ricated house is not cheaper toda than one which is built conven tionally.

Prefabrication, however, has made its impact felt in housing compo nents rather than complete house Prefabricated windows and doo are widely used, and there is ev dence of an acceleration and broad ening of this trend to include com plete bathroom and kitchen unit and wall sections. Though progres is being made, it is slow becaus producers are small and marketin inefficient, because it is difficult t integrate these components int the techniques and institutiona ized structure of traditional build ing, and because there is no enough dimensional compatibilit so that the process is not a smoot fitting together of the pieces of puzzle and still involves a grea deal of adjustment on the site. Ye despite all these factors, prefabr cated components are certain to in crease in importance.

More dramatic has been the im pact of mobile homes. These ar not trailers, but substantial unit which are seldom moved once the are set on the ground. They ar prefabricated houses but not co ventional ones. Without anyon paying much attention, they ha for years accounted for about on fifth of all new single-famil houses. But they have recently in creased their share to about

hird, and suddenly national attenion has focused on this phenomnon. Stocks of mobile home-buildng firms have shot up in the marets, and some of these firms have erged into conglomerates. While nstruction costs of conventional ousing have continued to inease, those of mobile homes have ecreased with increased producon, signalling their capacity for onomies of scale. The cost per quare foot is less than half of that conventional building, in spite its including furniture and quipment. (It is worth noting hat the mobile home industry has s origins in the automobile inustry rather than the building inustry.)

The spectacular rise in the numer of mobile homes has been an nvisible phenomenon to most mericans. Who lives in these ouses, and where are they? Most re in specially designed sites that re more prevalent in the South nd West than in the Northeast. Their inhabitants present a surrising range of incomes and occuations. Many among them could ell afford expensive housing but r reasons of consumer rationality nd preferences in life style choose is alternative. The houses themelves may be bigger than suburan houses and more luxurious, nd the ground around them is equently landscaped with trees nd gardens for a look of permaence.

Many industry observers are beinning to regard mobile homes as e precursors of a housing indusy based on large modular units hich could be assembled into inite variations. Others contemlate the possibility of fitting such nits like drawers into multi-story eel or concrete frames to produce partment houses, much as LeCorusier speculated some decades ago. t is clear that the boom in this pe of housing is no mere curisity: it holds the potential of ansforming the building of hous-ng and perhaps its forms. The present ugliness and low social esteem of much of this type of housing may repeat the story of the ugly duckling who grew into a swan, much as our present skyscrapers derive from greenhouses and lowly industrial buildings.

There are indications, too, that the institutional base for housing in general may be changing. Large corporations are becoming interested in diverse aspects of housing, and their powers in research, finance, management, and marketing could have a profound effect. Labor has not shown much flexibility, but there is hope there, too. Most of its protective practices have become unnecessary. The projected housing needs so far exceed the productive capacity under existing techniques of the available manpower that labor no longer has reason to fear technological unemployment. To this opportunity are joined pressures from builders of mobile homes, who are demonstrating the superiority of industrial over craft processes, from the blacks, who have been largely excluded from the building unions, and from the federal government, which is increasingly interested in raising productivity in this sector. Government's interest extends to the use of the unemployed in building so as to get money to those who need it and to train them for permanent employment. Although their use may not change (or may increase slightly) the money cost of houses, it would greatly reduce their economic cost to the nation. The use of an idle resource (labor in this case) carries a zero economic price. The wages of the otherwise unemployed are a transfer of money, but not a cost from the national point of view.

Let me conclude with a disquieting possibility which, as far as I know, no one has considered. The principal form of wealth of tens of millions of families in this country is their equity in their homes. That is to say, they count as savings the difference between what their home is worth and what remains owing on their mortgage. The value of the house is based on the land on which it stands and on the replacement value of the structure. If the cost of producing a house were halved tomorrow, these millions of families would wake up to find themselves dispossessed of these savings, and possibly in debt if the amount outstanding on their mortgages was greater than the new value of the house. Conversely, the banks in which they keep their other savings would be suddenly endangered by millions of mortgage loans which would be only partially secured. The economy would be shaken, many elderly people would go on relief, and we might see a revolt of the middle classes. But that is a bridge to be crossed when we come to it, and in the meantime anything that lowers the cost of housing is to the good.

William Alonso

William Alonso is professor of regional planning at the University of California, Berkeley.

Helping Out

The American Bar Association, working in conjunction with local bar associations in five cities, is trying to locate and train minority group lawyers in housing law to work with community organizations that want to sponsor housing projects but have neither the means nor the counsel to negotiate voluminous qualifying paperwork.

The program, Lawyers for Housing, is also trying to get the charitable competition — church groups, civic associations, etc. — to pool their resources and work through community-based housing development corporations.

As things stand now, according to John Lashly, chairman of the national committee overseeing the effort, the administrative difficulties involved in qualifying for FHA financing are insurmountable. Unless a lawyer's skills can be purchased on the open market, no housing business gets done.

Operating in St. Louis, Boston, Houston, Cincinnati, and Seattle, the ABA program will provide legal specialists who can sit down with community organizations, assist them in the planning and structuring of their projects, feed a lawyer into the effort cost-free, and then bow out.

The lawyer plugged into the project in this way is meant to assume responsibility for guiding the community group through the FHA maize and for locating startup money.

By encouraging the charities to pool their funds, the legal association hopes not only to make larger amounts of capital available, but to simplify the logistical and political process of getting such projects off the ground. Now it takes a lot of peddling around, meeting after meeting, and a lot of time spent unproductively, Mr. Lashly maintains.

A two-year demonstration funded under grants from OEO, HUD, and the Ford Foundation, the ABA program is also asking local bar associations to wield their substantial political clout in support of community-based housing efforts.

The irony, of course, is that the legal profession itself has created the complicated rules and abstruse language that has made housing law so impenetrable for people who live in houses.

To solve the housing problem, the nation must not only replace all this inadequate housing, but must also provide enoug new or rehabilitated units to accommodate future population growth and to replace units that will be demolished. From 1970 through 1979, about 12.3 million net new households will be formed in the United States. In addition, about 5.4 millio new housing units will be needed to replace the net losses from existing inventory caused by demolition, mergers, conversions, and other shifts. Therefore, the nation would have to produce about 17.7 million new or rehabilitated units n the 1970s just to keep even, and at least 27.7 million units to include elimination of all inadequate units. And it would lso have to create all the facilities and services necessary to generate "a suitable environment" for those units.

Anthony Downs, From *Agenda for the Nation* (Brookings Institutio

olitics

Call for Confrontation

he following is an edited transcrip- ion of a conversation on housing with ames Haughton and Timothy Cooney f the Harlem Unemployment Center nd the National Committee for a onfrontation With Congress. Mr. ooney was formerly Assistant Admin- strator in the New York City Housing nd Development Administration. Mr. laughton is a Harlem labor leader.

imothy Cooney

HEN WHITE AMERICA had its de- ression in the thirties, it was clear bout what had to be done in cer- ain areas. The 1937 Housing Act, assed with the help of labor, stated ery clearly that it intended to al- eviate the chronic problem of un- mployment. That act set the blue- rint for a slumless America. In the 2 years since, however, we've lost ore housing to substandard units very year than we've replaced.

Once World War II came the onstruction unions found plenty f other work to do. And once the ar ended there was even more ork to be done, without federally ubsidized low income public hous- ng. Thus the pressure for the jobs hat the housing bill was meant to reate didn't materialize. While ome 300,000 units have annually lipped into slum conditions for the ast 10 years, housing built with ederal subsidy has leveled at bout 50,000 units a year.

Yet there's enough building to be lone for the next ten years and if here was a real pressure to do ore building, residential build- ng, the only way you could do it ould be by hiring new men. But he greatest fear that the building rades have, and it comes out of he depression, is that after a boom period of construction, a bust period will follow in which their men will go hungry. The psychology isn't too complicated. 'If I'm in the union now, I know that if we can just keep construction at the present level, I'm going to work for the rest of my life. On the other hand, if we suddenly expand the industry, and take in twice as many men in the carpenter's union, and then go into the bust period everything becomes uncertain, seniority does not prevail, maybe I lose my job to a younger carpenter. So my basic position is only build enough, only expand the union to the level of construction on which we've been operating. And that this construction happens now in New York City to be mostly office buildings, and a few luxury apartments, is fine with me because I can see that teased out for the next ten years easily. Nor am I going to Washington as a carpenter to advocate a massive housing bill. I was brought up in the depression and unlike these young whippersnappers I know that there's going to be a bust coming sooner or later.' So the building industry is not only *not* building the housing that has to be built for the people, but it is putting a firm clamp on anyone who wants to do much building. In other words, it has us, in terms of residential housing, by a stranglehold and it will undercut any movement for a massive slum clearing program in America. It's a very negative force in the community.

Furthermore, housing cannot be built by the free enterprise system. It's just one of George Romney's dreams that he's going to cut costs of construction. It's just not going to happen. Subsidized housing in New York City now is $50 a room. You've got to make $15,000 a year to afford $50 a room, on the basis of one-quarter of your income. So you've reached a stage where free enterprise is doing some things very well. It's producing terrific television sets, it's producing terrific cars, it's producing terrific cosmetic materials, but it can't begin to produce housing for the masses. In New York City, 9 percent of the people can afford free enterprise housing.

With passage of the 1968 Housing Act at the end of the Johnson Administration, the problem was beginning to be defined. An authorization bill that had nothing to do with money, it at least committed a number of key congressmen to the notion that "if you want to get rid of the slums in America, you will have to spend this amount of money, and build at this particular rate." They set a rate of 600,000 units a year, which would begin to take care of slums in America over the course of the next 20 years, and would also require 500,000 new construction workers. There was virtually no support in America for that bill. It was passed more or less because a few organizations, such as ours, threatened to defeat some congressmen on the key committees. Once those committees passed that authorization bill, and said: "That's what should be done," and once Johnson's committee said: "Okay, it's only an authorization bill," then other factors were put into play. Senator Sparkman, who's head of banking and currency from Alabama, and who was opposed to the housing bills, has been asking fo five years now whether or not fre enterprise can build the housing For the first time last year the re estate industry testified in Congres that it cannot build housing for th masses. That changed a lot of att tudes in Congress. Until then Co gress was deferring to real esta and to apathy, to the fact that no body was demanding the housing bill.

We have a feeling that if Co gress would fully fund the housing act, and the money were available and the jobs were available, an there were some czar of housing fo America, with a lot of young czar around him, we could begin t move somewhere. But the Presiden of the United States would have t get up and say: "Gentlemen, fo the next ten years, we are going t make a slumless America our goal. It has to be big thinking, bol thinking, tie in free enterprise, t in big thinkers, studies, and ever thing else like that. But what we' talking about is a massive slu clearance in America, and until w decide to talk about that it's ju not going to happen. We also de perately need leadership. There nobody in America, who is natio ally known, who is a crusader for slumless America. He doesn't exis I'm thinking of a Martin Luth King, or a Bayard Rustin, or Whitney Young, or a John Lindsa or a Governor Rockefeller, or Hubert Humphrey, or a Gene M Carthy, who says: "My goal, m plan is a slumless America with the next 15 years. We have th blueprint, and I am going all o to bring that into being. That

hy goal and I'm going to speak to he President about it, I'm going o speak to the people, I'm going to rganize a march on Washington n its behalf, I'm going to fight this hing right down to the end, beause the basic thing that the cities eed is housing, the basic thing hat the black people need in the ommunity is jobs." This is the perect marriage. But the housing buaucrats have not built housing or so long that they feel terribly hreatened by any big housing proram. There is not a housing buaucrat in the country that beieves in a slumless America. There s not a housing bureaucrat in merica that will tell you the job an be done. The former head of UD, Robert Weaver, had a laundry ist of about 25 items explaining hy the job couldn't be done: uilding Codes, Inflation, Cost of umber, Red Tape. We met with omney not too long ago and he as taken that laundry list and dded items to it: Cost of Credit, nd so on. He's talking about new chniques to build housing to get round the basic issues so that he ould pretend he's doing someing. Housing in slumless America roughly a $200 billion proposiion. That's $20,000 per unit times million units. Now what very few eople understand about subsidized ousing is that most of it is paid or by the people who live there. t is not paid for by the governent. Only the subsidy is, and it is eant to make up the difference etween amortization, interest, and aintenance. But the point is that he housing bureaucrats are dediated to *not building housing*. hey are frightened of it, they on't know how to do it, they've ever built on a big level. So they ring out any housing projects ey get in order that there's alays a lot of money in the till to egin with. If you're going to build ousing in this country, you obviusly need a construction man, mebody who likes to build housing. Most of the bureaucrats are scared to death of a housing program. When we tried to get information out of Washington on how many jobs would be created by a program that would build 600,000 units a year, the bureaucrats at first would not answer our letter. It was only after a New York congressman wrote to them that they admitted the program would create 500,000 jobs. They told the congressman that 600,000 units was a ridiculously high figure. And they gave the laundry list of why it was bad. You go to the head of housing in New York City and he will give you a long laundry list of why no housing was built in the Lindsay Administration. Any bureaucrat around this country, with a few exceptions, will tell you why the job can't be done.

James Haughton

Not too long ago we were in Washington trying to get the Nixon Administration to go along with the Housing Act authorization. We go into the HUD building, which is a very modern structure, no doubt housing thousands and thousands of employees, engineers, designers, architects, lawyers, what-have-you, meet with Mr. Romney and Mr. Romney proceeds to express concern about inflation. He starts throwing out one excuse after another about why there couldn't be a serious housing program developed in this country. Here is this fantastic HUD building, housing an organization with thousands and thousands of employees but which is not building any housing in the country – a vast bureaucracy which has its counterpart in lesser bureaucracies throughout the country, on the state level, on the city level, that is really not building to meet the needs of middle income, low income, and poor people. So we have two basic problems here: we have the on-going bureaucracies that have become conditioned to not building and the people who man these bureaucracies who don't have a building outlook and mentality because they haven't been building, and you have the failure of the government to appropriate the necessary funds for a meaningful housing program across the country. I think those are the two decisive factors creating a serious housing crisis in this country.

But at this point the Nixon Administration seems impervious to outside pressure and unless there is a massive kind of force to dramatize this critical question, namely, a hundred thousand people in Washington, around the country, cities being tied up for a day, making demands of the administration, there's not going to be too much happening. Inadequate housing is linked to the very nature of the American system. It's no accident that this problem has brought us to a very critical impasse. Whether it can reform itself is a question I'm inclined to answer in the negative. It will get more critical, it will be inclined to take on certain kinds of social, politically explosive characteristics– how that will work out, I'm not sure. I think there must be some fundamental changes in the American system if we're going to resolve the whole question of unemployment, poverty, rotten housing. A new framework is needed, a tie-in between federal, state, and city government. There's no other way. The community development approach isn't enough. There has to be a massive housing program, that is, if it's going to be done at all under this system, as we know it. And massive support.

There hasn't been a mass movement in support of housing for the same reason there hasn't been one for decent jobs, or air pollution. Apathy. A great sense of alienation. And they conspire, in a sense, to aggravate the problem. People don't have the ability or the capacity to really organize massively to effect necessary changes. This is also a problem that figures in the inability of the system to reform itself. Namely, if people are unable to us the existing apparatus for chan they feel alienated and apatheti then the problem continues to gro worse.

We had a concept going whe we were lobbying for the Housin and Neighborhood Developmen Act. We were really encouraged b the support we were getting in th Congress, encouraged that ther was a major housing program com ing down the road especially geare for the poor areas, and we wante to prepare the community for thi As we were lobbying, we knew th community was prepared to seiz the job opportunities that woul be made available and we fough for and got introduced into th legislation the section that's calle Jobs and Housing. And that, in ef fect, says the jobs would go t neighborhood people. So we wer attempting, at least conceptuall to do two things: Impress the go ernment with the need for a ma jor housing assignment, particu larly for black Americans, an to prepare the community to tak hold of these opportunities whe they were made available. We'r still doing that. And there's likelihood of a national coalitio and of its being effective.

When could we expect to see suc a demand? We're seeing it ever day. I think the country moves i a crisis kind of way. I think critica things will have to happen. An the masses of people will have t be stirred. And out of that you ge a broad consensus for certain kind of programs. For our part, we se it as a hard uphill battle. We don see revolution around the corne even though we wish it were. W have to take the hard path of re form – and to constantly and con tinuously organize, educate, an pressure for a program that we fe can at least begin to solve the prob lem for the millions of people. I can't come from a local leve There's no local solution. It has t be federal funds. □

The Living of Schools

Process

A Place to Participate

One of the lovely functions of a teacher . . . to continually hold out all kinds of greater possibilities . . .

In a sense, the education of children may be thought of as the way a certain class of adults (the educators) seeks to manage the time and energies of those relegated to its jurisdiction (at least in a modern industrial or technological society).

This view comes to mind if we pay any attention at all to the physical facilities that are used as public schools. Can there be much doubt that a primary concern of the planners and designers of these institutions is management and control? But this of course is thought to be a necessary function of an institution which must coordinate and process thousands.

If education (or let us say attendance at these institutions) is compulsory and recalcitrants subject to punishment, the physical plant itself must in some measure serve as an extension of the coercive network. (Yet another burden for a well-meaning architect.)

If we think of education somewhat differently, however – as the process whereby a child grows through an exploration and realization of his emerging self as that self lives, works and plays with other young people and adults around him – we move toward the idea of a school for use rather than control. And if we accept the principle that coercion as an important means of educating children or fostering growth is not only unsuccessful but wrong, we proceed to the creation of environments in which another set of possibilities exists.

A school becomes, then, one kind of place where children may come to participate in a society of other young people and adults, to realize and measure themselves, and to seek pleasures and challenges. The adults in such a place, because of their experience and maturity, are concerned to offer their knowledge of the ways of the world and its cultural and intellectual heritage. How each person uses this "community" is a highly individual matter. It will vary as tastes and talents vary, as age and seasons vary. Any stability and continuity that seems important will probably come from the adults whose interests and life patterns change less frequently.

Any such environment also must be described either implicitly or explicitly in terms of those activities which it encourages as either useful or important. This will vary somewhat with the geographical and economic position of the community, although not as much as one might think. There are certain constants which in some measure should be available (not taught) to everyone, for they represent at least a partial range of what is possible for the realization of a degree of personal fulfillment.

- Art and a wide range of craft must be available, both as a casual and occasional diversion which almost everybody at some time or other participates in, and as a serious and technically demanding discipline for those few who are inclined.
- Provision for the presence and

On Public and Private Realms

A crisis in education would at any time give rise to serious concern even if it did not reflect, as in the present instance it does, a more general crisis and instability in modern society. For education belongs among the most elementary and necessary activities of human society, which never remains as it is but continuously renews itself through birth, through the arrival of new human beings. These newcomers, moreover, are not finished but in a state of becoming. Thus the child, the subject of education, has for the educator a double aspect: he is new in a world that is strange to him and he is in process of becoming, he is a new human being and he is a becoming human being. This double aspect is by no means self-evident and it does not apply to the animal forms of life; it corresponds to a double relationship, the relationship to the world on the one hand and to life on the other. The child shares the state of becoming with all living things; in respect to life and its development, the child is a human being in process of becoming, just as a kitten is a cat in process of becoming. But the child is new only in relation to a world that was there before him, that will continue after his death, and in which he is to spend his life. If the child were not a newcomer in this human world but simply a not yet finished living creature, education would be just a function of life and would need to consist in nothing save that concern for the sustenance of life and that training and practice in living that all animals assume in respect to their young.

Human parents, however, have not only summoned their children into life through conception and birth, they have simultaneously introduced them into a world. In education they assume responsibility for both, for the life and development of the child and for the continuance of the world. These two responsibilties do not by any means coincide; they may indeed come into conflict with each other. The responsibility for the development of the child turns in a certain sense against the world: the child requires protection and care so that nothing destructive may happen to him from the world. But the world, too, needs protection to keep it from being overrun and destroyed by the onslaught of the new that bursts upon it with each new generation.

Because the child must be protected against the world, his traditional place is in the family, whose adult members daily return back from the outside world and withdraw into the security of private life within four walls. These four walls, within which people's private family life is lived, constitute a shield against the world and specifically against the public aspect of the world. They enclose a secure place, without which no living thing can thrive. This holds good not only for the life of childhood but for human life in general. Wherever the latter is consistently exposed to the world without the protection of privacy and security its vital quality is destroyed. In the public world, common to all, persons count, and so does work, that is, the work of our hands that each of us contributes to our common world; but life *qua* life does not matter there. The world cannot be regardful of it, and it has to be hidden and protected from the world.

Everything that lives, not vegetative life alone, emerges from darkness and, however strong its natural tendency to thrust itself into the light, it nevertheless needs the security of darkness to grow at all. This may indeed be the reason that children of famous parents so often turn out badly. Fame penetrates the four walls, invades their private space, bringing with it, especially in present-day conditions, the merciless glare of the public realm which floods everything in the private lives of those concerned, so that the children no longer have a place of security where they can grow. But exactly the same destruction of the real living space occurs wherever the attempt is made to turn the children themselves into a kind of world. Among these peer groups then arises a public life of a sort and, quite apart from the fact that it is not a real one and that the whole attempt is a sort of fraud, the damaging fact remains that children — that is, human beings in process of becoming but not yet complete — are thereby forced to expose themselves to the light of a public existence.

That modern education, insofar as it attempts to establish a world of children, destroys the necessary conditions for vital development and growth seems obvious. But that such harm to the developing child should be the result of modern education strikes one as strange indeed, for this education maintained that its exclusive aim was to serve the child and rebelled against the methods of the past because these had not sufficiently taken into account the child's inner nature and his needs. "The Century of the Child," as we may recall, was going to emancipate the child and free him from the standards derived from the adult world. Then how could it happen that the most elementary conditions of life necessary for the growth and development of the child were overlooked or simply not recognized? How could it happen that the child was exposed to what more than anything else characterized the adult world, its public aspect, after the decision had just been reached that the mistake in all past education had been to see the child as nothing but an undersized grown-up? *Hannah Arendt*

Excerpted from *Between Past and Future* (Viking).

rare of animals. Not just an occasional pet but a wide variety of whole families or colonies.

• Books and study indicating the range of our intellectual and cultural heritage. There need be rarely more than one or two copies of any one book for, as in a library, there will be a few occasions when more than a few people will be using the same book at the same time.

• The opportunity for useful building should be possible. Ideally something on a scale larger than small pieces of furniture. Something that comes to mind are temporary club houses or climbing structures which could be torn down every year or even more often.

• Some kind of serious growing of food ought to be possible even in the city and in the winter using artificial light and heat.

• The experience of wilderness must be a periodic event in everyone's life. For this and other reasons groups will be travelling away from the school occasionally or perhaps frequently.

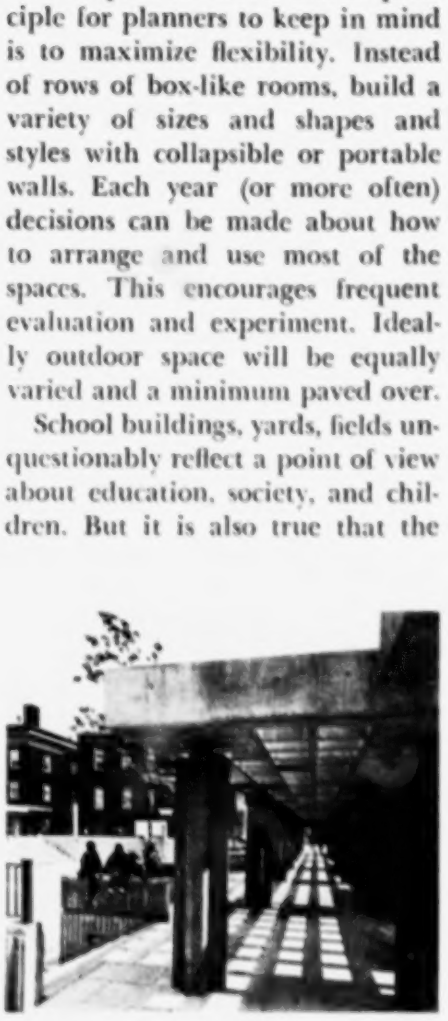
With a little thought and imagination all these things will be seen to be possible in any area or neighborhood.

The above categories are the kinds of things that the planners and teachers can appropriately provide and give some shape to. Whether one participates and to what extent is again each individual's decision. Much of each person's time will of course be given to play reflection, socializing, goofing off, etc.; all of which is at least as important as anything else we do.

This whole approach depends on a non-coercive, non-compulsory institution. If the kids or the adults don't want to be there or don't want to participate and are not able to easily opt out for short periods or altogether, I feel, they will ultimately fight it in one way or another.

Perhaps the most useful principle for planners to keep in mind is to maximize flexibility. Instead of rows of box-like rooms, build a variety of sizes and shapes and styles with collapsible or portable walls. Each year (or more often) decisions can be made about how to arrange and use most of the spaces. This encourages frequent evaluation and experiment. Ideally outdoor space will be equally varied and a minimum paved over.

School buildings, yards, fields unquestionably reflect a point of view about education, society, and children. But it is also true that the



people inside the buildings can have a degree of control over their lives which far transcends the architectural limitations.

This sort of discussion may sound impossibly utopian to many embroiled in the day to day coercive milieu where it seems that the only possible course is to plod on with the hope for minor occasional gratification. One of the lovely functions of a teacher however is to continually hold out all kinds of greater possibilities. There are always some who are ready to grab on.

Barry Flint

Barry Flint spent eight of the last 10 years teaching in and serving as a member of the board of the Walden School in Berkeley, California. He and his wife now operate a rural boarding school for junior and senior high school-age students in northern California that they planned and built themselves.

Kid's Home, Teacher's Base

English Nursery Schools

Material condensed for this article appears in slightly different form in the forthcoming The English Infant School and Informal Education, *by Lillian Weber, to be published for the Center for Urban Education by Prentice-Hall*

Educators in England view highrise apartment buildings negatively. The English recognize that the highrise apartment house complex provides a less natural way of living for children because it separates children from the natural materials of learning, the natural environment that helps children begin to develop understanding of process and causality. Living in these buildings is considered a hardship for children. The hardship is more than the hardship of poverty. It is the hardship of urbanization. This concern for the loss of human dimension in the environment shapes the design of the English nursery school.

Each nursery school is a planned oasis of beauty. Such planning provides immediate access to the outdoors, so that indoor and outdoor play can go on simultaneously. It provides for a garden. It provides truly adequate sink and toilet facilities. Above all, the building plan offers space for all the richness and variety of equipment as well as the means to arrange this equipment in areas that are suitable and inviting.

THE BUILDING is a one-story structure. All doors and windows open out onto paved bays and all lead out to a garden. Each building has a staff room, a headmistress' (principal's) office, and a medical room. Most schools have kitchens. A number of schools maintain laundries which are used by several schools jointly. Usually a wide corridor connects all these facilities.

The washroom and toilet areas are spacious. They are filled with children-sized sinks, six to a group of thirty, and children-sized toilets, five to a group of thirty. In some of the older nursery schools (pre-World War II vintage), the washroom has a large tub placed originally to allow the teacher to stand while bathing the children. Redesigned with benches around it and a shelf for accessories, the tub now serves for ideal water play. Large window walls divide these facilities from the playrooms to permit the teacher a quick look-in for checking the whereabouts or needs of pupils.

With present-day central delivery lunch service, use of the kitchen for lunches is no longer necessary. But the kitchen is still used for children's cooking projects. Widespread use of paper goods is beginning to make laundries less essential, though the full-time schools equipped as they are with linen for cots, blankets, and often coveralls or smocks for the children, still require laundry services.

THE SCHOOL GARDEN is usually marked by a luxuriance that offers a multitude of uses. Levels and areas are planned to create spaces for small groupings, with encircling paths and plantings for privacy and protection. There are various places to climb and objects to climb on. There may be a small pool that looks deep and well-like, with steps leading down to it and edged with flowers. Often, steps and seats are situated all over. The landscaping varies from school to school. In one, an unusual area features a large sea net spread over four posts and a stone seat circle. Big trees or full-branched shrubs may add to the flower-planting areas, the area for digging, the areas with cut-down stumps covered with mosses, fungi, and peeling bark, and even, in a few cases, a high-grass, meadow-like area. Animals (rabbits and guinea pigs) often come out to play in the garden.

Finally, there are the paved areas, just outside the windows doors, with standard nursery outdoor equipment, where children can ride tricycles and scooters, play

with ropes and sticks, or ride a rope swing. In good weather, these areas are used for lunch service and for the nap on cots after lunch. An overhang makes possible outside use of the easels and workbenches. An interesting and important aside—in London, the gardens are maintained by the Parks Department. Repairs are taken care of by agencies of the London City Council.

IN THE THINKING of the English teacher-planners, the corridors are not only areas for transit but also areas to fill with things for the changes in pace and activities during the school day. On rainy days, the corridors also provide for an in-and-outness that the garden offers in clement weather.

A typical corridor may contain a windowed bay inset, furnished with a sofa, two easy chairs, a bottle garden, and books. A longer and wider corridor may have a slide in it, a book corner with child-sized upholstered chairs, and interesting plant arrangements. The total effect is uncrowded, attractive, and inviting. Through these—and other-styled corridors – there is constant ebb and flow of movement. The floor-windows are kept open, so that children can go to some of the activities and places outdoors, leave those, and come back to some of the things indoors.

Though each group of thirty pupils has its own large room (much like our home-room arrangement) as its base, the planning for the in-and-outness is the key to the English nursery school. Such planning results in a great ease of movement, in which the children move about as individuals, with little of the noise and hecticness often prevalent in groups as small as 15 in the traditional closed classroom. As a way of easing the pressure of large numbers and of allowing greater access to the rich supply of equipment, in-and-outness is most effective.

English Infant Schools

The Infant School emphasizes the wholeness of a child's living, the wholeness of the environment. The school implements this wholeness in its timetable, in its use of physical plant, in its life. The physical plant of the school is of great importance in implementing the breakdown of the traditional classroom structure into free movement by individuals that the English call Informal Education. The school space is used in its totality. Every

Hiroji Kubota

part of it is utilized almost all the time of the school day so that the children can make use in their learning of every aspect of the environment.

As in the nursery school, corridors are used. Children can be found at easels, workbenches, water tables, book corners – all in the corridor. (Corridors in the United States are empty. Meant only for passage, for going in order and quietly and quickly from one place to another, they are not part of the *living* of a school.)

The added feature of the big hall takes the overflow of environment and children from any classroom even more fully than does the corridor. Where the hall is central, with classrooms opening to it, it is most easily used. It feeds movements back and forth from the classroom and allows easy access for the teacher to the activities in the hall and back into the classroom. Children from other classrooms, teachers from other classrooms, can be stimulated, sparked off from contact with the work of another child or teacher or group. In this center hall, the headmistress' contact with all is eased and maximized. Using this center hall she can stimulate, assist and demonstrate. The hall is communications center, with the headmistress acting as transmitter, receiver.

The big hall is often the place for mathematical exploration (with large, one-foot-tile squares or surveyor link chains). In fact, in it all kinds of work go on, from music, workbench, printing to cooking.

Acting platforms are constantly in use. They provide the setting for role-playing in addition to the role-playing of the Wendy House (housekeeping corner) of the classrooms. The platform was conceived as cutting across subject areas, to support an integrative process for the child. The child is enabled to integrate elements from many sources of experiences in acting pieces of his own experience. When he does this, or reenacts a story, read or heard, he is ordering his thinking, recalling, selecting, deciding on sequence, hypothesizing on the possibilities of the future, the reality of the present, absorbing into himself the feeling of past – his own or storied. His acting is *with* others and spatial relationships – "you be there" and "you there" – have to be worked ou His language is extended and clar fied as he works out the "how" wi others, as he projects "what yo say" if you are this or that one. the group of children invites (ofte on the suggestion of the hea mistress) their teacher to "see" th play, a new need to communica *might* further clarify language an thought. Working with others, th child's discrepancies in his hypoth sis of "how it might be" are co tested and new syntheses trie And, of course, acting may lead t writing – of invitations or of th play itself.

The use of the big hall also ha its *disadvantages* – noise, interfe ence with the free activities h some scheduled group work, suc as physical education, music an movement, the morning servic Even when some teachers and hea mistresses, taking the group fo physical education or music an movement, allow a moderat amount of the individual work ge ing on at the side to continue, as ing only that it move aside to th edges of the big hall and be quie er, there is still this interference.

But the noise is mitigated b cause the free activities are relate to individuals or small group Two or three children, in pursu of these activities, are isolated fro the large group in the same wa that a table at a restaurant isolate a dating couple. Children an teachers *do* seem to be able to co centrate. Certainly the noise concurrent activity, where a pi point focus from all is not bein sought, is less bothersome than th noise from a few where total atte tion *is* being sought.

More free activity seems possibl with the center hall – or cente large corridor used in the same wa as described for the big hall – tha in any other arrangement. Th center hall produces the cleane breakthrough of the classroo structure, produces the *open* schoo the mixing of classes. The larg corridor used in this way does th

oo. The bays, by themselves, do ot. The in-and-outness of bays llows overflow of the classroom, llows unimpeded use of the en- ronment, but does not create the lass-to-class stimulation – the open chool.

In the New Towns, in newer, ost-World War II schools, where orridors tend to be eliminated, alls are to a side, with paved bays pening out from classrooms for he overflow. The side hall does ot allow the easy back-and-forth novement of individuals to the lass. It also does not allow easy ccess for the teacher and there- ore is less in use. In schools with ctivity periods where for that time he teachers or the heads could be lmost wholly in the corridor or ig hall, the side hall is certainly ell used. In each arrangement, it s the headmistress who makes pos- ible the rich use of the hall, with mall groups or with individuals, or music, a play, etc.

But in the newest schools, the lurring of division of work-play eriods, of teaching and non-teach- ng areas, between ages and be- ween subjects, results in a planning or openness that even in some chools results in no classrooms. Work areas are bays opening from ommunal areas, as in the old big all, with some provision for pri- acy.

A certain tolerance for overflow ituations, for trust of children not nmediately "under the teacher's ye" seems to have been well estab- ished, and over a long period. English teachers, following from roebel and Montessori, in the late 9th and early 20th century, had ncouraged individual work and andiwork, had introduced *objects* n the classroom. These were intro- uced in old buildings, in old rowded classrooms too small for he "objects." Space was needed or these and for the individual ork with objects. Teachers had to lan work in classrooms around ome movements *to* objects. Over- flow to corridor and big hall be- came commonplace.

For the most part, in the old In- fant Schools, free access, flow, in- and-outness, is an indoor phenom- enon. In the good weather of the summer term (Easter through July), even without ease of access, teach- ers and children drag out half the equipment so that workbench, block building, clay, painting, read- ing, and sewing could go on out- doors – so much do the teachers believe that use of the equipment in this in-and-out way is good and so much are they willing to *trust* the children to go unsupervised to equipment at which they could work. Some old schools have had doors opened out to the outdoors, to facilitate this free access to equipment, this in-and-out flow of activity. New schools have inner courtyards much in use and out- door paved bays opening from each classroom. But on the whole it is in the hall and corridor that in-and- outness exist in the Infant School.

The contribution to informal education made by the ingenuity of heads using in-and-outness, and overflow to corridor and big hall, is recognized by the Plowden Com- mittee:

> The informal arrangements possible in small schools have probably done more to make teaching flexible be- tween classes as well as inside a class than the organized time-tabled ar- rangements (discussed) . . . . An in- fant school classroom is too small and too confined for all the things the children need to do. They over- flow into the open air where there are no walls to shut off one class from another; they stray into cor- ridors which are not marked out into pens like sheep folds. The classroom is the children's home, their teacher's base; but outside it any teacher may be drawn into any child's concern. The school becomes a unity.*

Lillian Weber

Lillian Weber is associate professor of early childhood education at the City College of New York and director of the Open Corridor project in nine Manhattan public schools.

*Plowden Report, p. 276, par.766.

Everywhere School

A System of Community Housing and Education

One of the country's more interest- ing and enterprising urban renew- al schemes – mixing housing and education – is waiting approval in Hartford, Conn.

Based in the neighborhood of South Arsenal, where 60 percent of the residents are on welfare and the rest are not significantly better off (the area is 60 per cent Negro and 40 per cent Puerto Rican), the plan has as its major concept an "Everywhere School," a system of education that runs through the entire community, socially as well as physically, and involves the neighborhood in its daily opera- tion.

The plan also includes an inno- vative housing system that allows a unit to adapt to the changing size of a family over the years, and allows the neighborhood to evolve from low income to middle income in the same place.

Credit for the plan goes to the South Arsenal Neighborhood De- velopment Corp. (SAND), the first such community-based agency in Connecticut. SAND started as the South Arsenal Neighborhood Coun- cil, financed with anti-poverty mon- ey, and then became a development corporation two years later, in 1967, to take an active part in urban renewal.

The neighborhood it was set up to revive has at least half of its buildings in deficient and sub- standard condition; about half of its buildings are without central heating, and about 95 percent are controlled by absentee ownership.

SAND organized discussions for the 500 families of South Arsenal, de- termined they would rather remain where they were than move to an- other part of the city or out to the suburbs, and got the people to con- sider various alternatives for re- structuring the community. The model they lighted on was the *university*. It had earlier been de- cided by neighborhood people that their main objective in renewing the area was a good education for their children. The idea of a uni- versity – where education is a way of life, and where the emphasis is on getting ahead (intellectually or economically) – seemed to respond to this hope. Thus the Everywhere School that developed is like a uni- versity, and is the principle on which the plan pivots.

In the plan, the traditional school has been broken out into a series of teaching spaces and facili- ties now spread throughout the neighborhood. The library becomes a community focal point; the audi- torium becomes a community thea- ter. The gym is a third central place; arts and industrial crafts are grouped into a fourth.

These special facilities form a kind of neighborhood commons, while the other educational spaces are strung together along the ground floor of highrise and low- rise buildings. Because the housing is based on a 12-foot-square mod- ule, the meandering school space is in small bays, suited to a variety of small activities. There are also larger spaces indoors and outdoors. And all of the spaces and buildings in the k-through-third grade *school* are adaptable to other uses.

Envisaged of course is a more fluid relationship between parent and school, and vice versa, in which parents have to pass through the school and see that something is going on that concerns them and where the school is clear it is con- nected to a world outside.

Local people are involved in teaching too. For every 150 chil- dren, there are 15 adults – one is a master teacher and four are regu- lar teachers, asked to live in the community; five are aides from the neighborhood; two are program de- signers; and three are teaching as- sociates (broken into half-day stints that could produce as many as 30 positions – professional people, ordi- nary people, graduate students, do-gooders). The notion being ex-

plored is a simple one: If a child wonders why the moon program is called Apollo, an adult who knows Greek mythology might be called in for a few hours. Or if a man in the neighborhood likes to build garden walls, he might take some children and build a wall where it is needed.

Equally innovative, the housing system considers each person entitled to a basic square footage – a module of 12-feet square. (Since this is barely livable for one, the basic space for one or two persons is two modules, then each additional person means an added module.) Each unit has a prefabricated bathroom (with a second bathroom available to families of eight or more), and a number of kitchen components that varies with the size of the family. Other than this, the living unit is unfinished. The family purchases whatever components it wants – movable walls, folding beds, closet and desk units –or it just moves in with what it has. As the family expands or contracts, it takes over an adjacent module or gives one back – and rearranges the new interior.

Whether highrise or lowrise, the apartments are clustered to eliminate all interior corridors. Living space is never more than 12 feet from an outside wall. In addition, the plan calls for no more than 24 people – three to five families – in any single unit of apartments, with one family being paid to maintain the space. It also calls for, at least initially, straight rentals since only 12 of the 500 families involved can afford to buy.

The plans were presented to the school board, city council, and city planning commission in spring 1969 and returned to SAND for further refinement. Having done this, the neighborhood agency now has to wait once more while a new school board, and the city council evaluate the proposal from scratch. A decision about naming SAND developer for the urban renewal area is also pending. In any case, no one in South Arsenal knows if these ideas will work in ways that are envisioned. The only certainty, in fact, is that the existing remedies to educational and housing problems – a new school building, imposed and operated by an external group of managers, or some new housing units, designed and managed from a distance – has made for little real change in Hartford. □

Liberated Zone
Evolving a Place to Learn

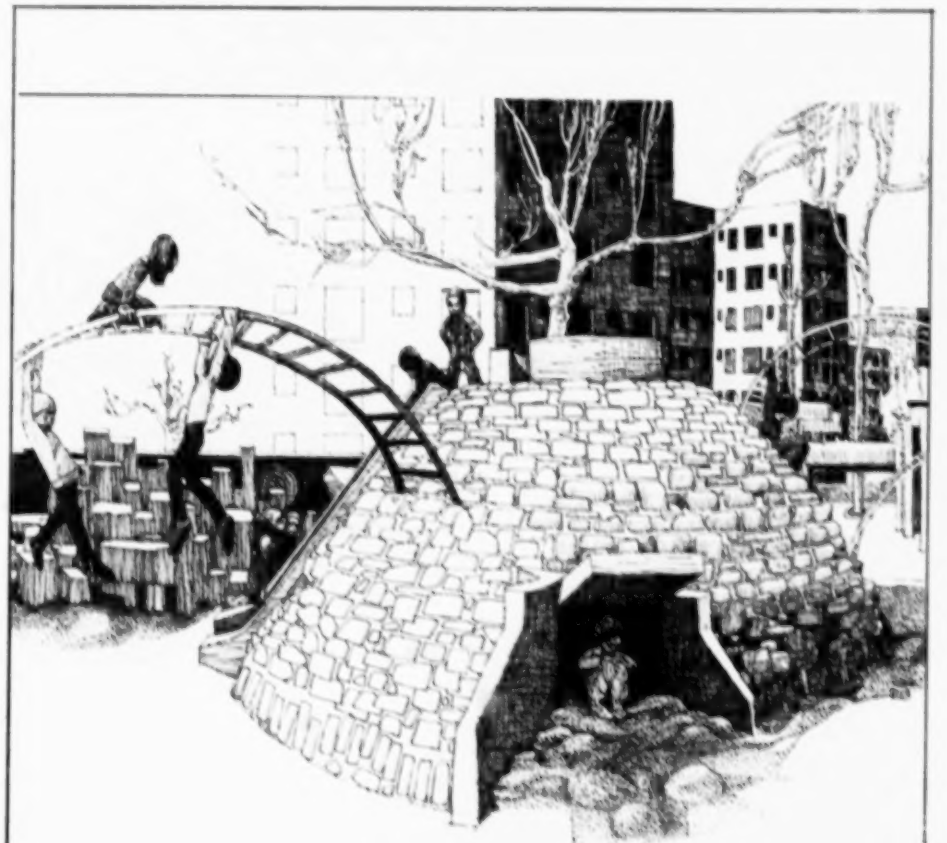
I WAS DRIVING down from Boston to New York City with a friend who teaches at a suburban high school near Boston. My friend was obviously excited as he told me about an idea he'd been exploring with a group of his students. How he or anyone else could get excited about anything that was happening in high school took getting used to. I could only think back to my own high school days as something I had to suffer through. But as he went on and I got caught up in his enthusiasm some things troubling me about my own work began to take on a new perspective.

Many of my friend's students were reacting to high school as I had, only he thought they might be able to create an alternative. The idea was to make a place where students could come together on their own for discussions, to drink coffee, or do other things that might interest them; a place where they might invite someone to speak to them in a context for learning more intimate than their school. This could be a place where students discuss what they want their education to be and how to get it. "A coffee house you might call it – or a youth center – but that's a bad word for it." It sure was, I thought; a "youth center" sounded like the product of someone trying to keep kids off the streets. In fact, some people in town "gave" the kids "youth center" several years ag complete with an adult to supervi things. The kids stayed away droves.

The new youth center was goi to be different; it could be a pla that was built and run by the st dents themselves. They had alrea had some experience in runni programs outside the normal scho context. Some time ago the scho sent students and teachers to a co ference to discuss the local "dru problem," putting students t gether with psychologists and teac ers. The conference did not solv the drug problem – but it did giv students an opportunity to exper ence a new group situation, outsid the framework of the classroom where they could have more con trol over what was being discussed They continued other discussio groups, this time with only a fe teachers, including my friend. The met on Sunday afternoons at a elegant colonial house lent ther by the town. Would I be interested in helping to design a more per manent place where this could hap pen? "Well, maybe – let me think about it. I'll let you know – could be interesting."

High school students and subu bia were very far from my head For the past few years I had been an "advocate planner"; that's th term to describe planners and ar chitects who work directly for th poor, trying to help them plan and design their own neighborhood All of this had taken place in cen tral city areas and the clients were always adults.

The role of advocate planner fo the poor, furthermore, was devise to help right the balance of plan ning powers. But many advocate are now finding that decisions ar still remote from the people who are affected by them. After delive ing a program to build, say, lo income housing, to their client people who would use such hou ing, they find their clients are u



Eleanor Magid

able to put such plans into effect. Making serious environmental changes involves years of planning studies, getting private foundation and government grants, dealing with private developers. A few "leaders" become "educated," and master the bureaucracy of planning, but the mass of people are still unable to create a direct response to their needs. People can't just say we've had it, we're going to rebuild our community, our apartment, what have you, and simply do it.

What did working in the suburbs have to do with this? People in the suburbs have "arrived." They are presumably receivers of the material benefits our society has to offer to those who perform well: The single family house and the "good" schools controlled by the community—just the kind of control black people in the city center were fighting for. What need did the suburbs have for advocate planners?

Well, if advocate planning is founded on the idea of providing adequate representation for all interest groups in decisions that affect their lives, here was a group of disenfranchised people, white middle class fifteen to seventeen year olds, attempting to find a way to gain more control over their own lives, looking for a positive alternative to the institutionalized "learning place." In effect, building a youth center would be creating a learning environment by the people who used that environment. For me this was the critical element in making it a relevant advocacy project.

Generating new possibilities for learning places in the suburban situation would expose the problems of the existing schools. These would present models for students, parents, and teachers to evaluate against their existing situation. Getting people to look at the content of institutions, in addition to who controls them, would elaborate the present argument of community control versus city control. Youth centers, or whatever they're called, created by people who are exploring new patterns of becoming educated, could be part of the broader cultural revolution.

As THESE GENERAL goals began to jell, I began to share my friend's enthusiasm for the center. After discussing it with my architecture students at M.I.T., I suggested that we make the center our class project, in which my students, the high school students, and I would work to design the building.

I felt the idea of what this place was going to be, what purpose it was going to serve, should evolve from the ideas of the students as they got closer to it through discussion and designing. The important thing was not to be limited to preconceived activities and architectural form based on existing "teaching" spaces. Before generating ideas we were going to listen. I didn't want the usual program — so many square feet of this or that kind of space — but we had to start somewhere in order to begin our designs.

What do you want this place to be?

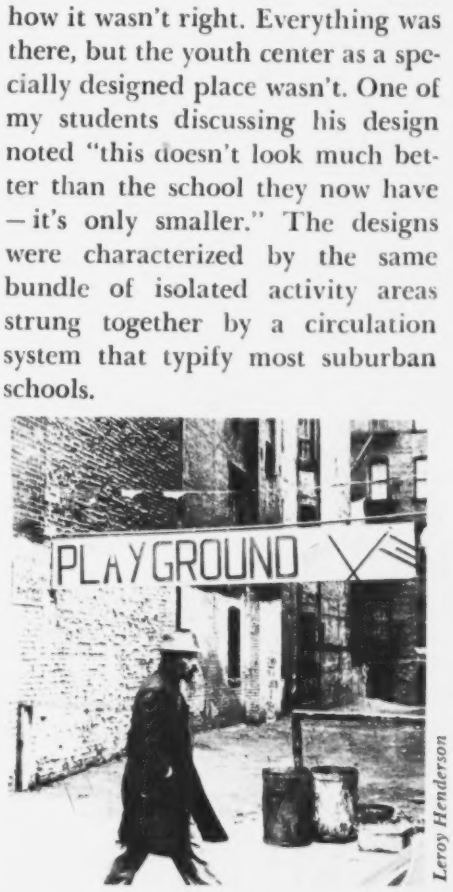
Something very different than the school we have.
. . . If I had to use one word to describe it, it would have to be something improbable.
A liberated zone.
A coffee house that's always open.
A place where groups can meet for discussions.
Yes, and a place for meditation.
And a place for karate.
We want a room to hear stereo music.
We'll also have jam sessions.
An auto shop.
Pottery and art studios.
A padded room.
A place to dance (about 200 people).

Why don't you just get the school to give this to you?

Because it wouldn't work out. There would be special times when it could be used — and they would give us someone to supervise it.

We need our own place where we can go anytime we want.

We began to design using this set of "wants" as a point of departure for developing a number of environmental alternatives. The designs seemed to move in the direction of satisfying all the requests by including a space for everything the students asked for. But somehow it wasn't right. Everything was there, but the youth center as a specially designed place wasn't. One of my students discussing his design noted "this doesn't look much better than the school they now have — it's only smaller." The designs were characterized by the same bundle of isolated activity areas strung together by a circulation system that typify most suburban schools.



Leroy Henderson

We all discussed this; maybe the unique feature of the youth center should be its ability to bring people together in more communal ways than now exist. After all, many of the students could have privacy at home for listening to music, meditation, and study. Instead of just providing a compendium of facilities, we could create an environment that induced people to come together. Eating seemed the one common activity that ostensibly brings people together to fulfill individual desires, but often allows people the "opening" for communal activities. Some restaurants and most coffee houses are places where this happens. The kitchen during a party at home is often the most used space for discussions. Somehow it's easier for people to get together over passing each other food, than simply introducing themselves. Perhaps coming into the kitchen for food means you don't have to make a commitment to talk to someone too long since your primary purpose was obviously to satisfy your hunger. This being done you can always leave in the middle of a conversation since you weren't there to talk in the first place. The kitchen coffee shop in the center could be a serve-yourself operation, quite open in form to the areas adjacent to it. This "heart" might also be one of the first contact points for people entering the building, allowing them to be near "what's happening" without having to wander through the building. While there was agreement on emphasizing the communal activity, there was still a strong sense of the need for some private spaces where people could get away; one of the M.I.T. students designed a tower of space cubicles, some of which were entered by climbing a ladder. Having to climb into the space could further enhance a feeling of isolation when somone moved away from the group activities.

The design of the center was both a threat and a promise to the students. The fact that something might actually get built promised something tangible and encouraged the students involved to think more about how they would use it. More specific thinking, in turn, gave the architects and themselves more concrete material to work with. But having no real experience with either designing or promoting the kind of learning place they were talking about, they were uncertain about what the design should be. Would people use it? Would they actually get it done? There was the threat of raising hopes and then failing; failing not only yourself but also failing in the eyes of your fellow students whose hopes you have helped raise.

THERE ARE ALREADY benefits from our design process aside from the possibility of constructing the building. In evaluating alternatives for

this center, the students had to consider and develop ideas about how they saw themselves relating to each other and to the outside world. In one of the sessions for example, I asked what impression they would like the youth center to have on someone driving past it on the way home from work.

> We should make it colonial on the outside and do what we want inside. That way people driving by will not get upset by it.
>
> What do you mean colonial on the outside — we'll make it the way we want all over. Let's not worry about what other people think.

They also considered the problem of how the adults in the community would react to it. As some saw it, the parents had the power to close the place. The students saw the building as a display of their ideas, like a badge worn on their sleeve.

> I don't think my parents will like it. Right now I'm home after school, and my parents like that — if the center gets built, I'll go there after school, be home for supper, and go there again at night. They're not going to like that.
>
> How can they solve that problem — the fact is you are isolating them.
>
> I don't know — maybe have another baby.
>
> Is this place just for kids? What about adults? Can they come?
>
> Adults can come, but on our terms. They can't come in like they usually do, judging us as adults, giving us a lot of bullshit about how they're going to close the place down if they don't like it. They can come in and argue, but they have to do it on the basis of equals. We can argue but they can't pull rank on us.
>
> This has got to be a place where people can feel free. If they want to come on that basis, why not?

THE REACTION of parents is obviously crucial to the future of the center. No doubt there will be a range of opinion. The building of a place run by the people who use it, making decisions about how they want to educate themselves, can easily be seen as a threat to those who view the role of the school as preparing their children to fit into the world as it exists. Those who have accustomed themselves to a situation in which they have little freedom to make choices about their own environment and the way they live may either react negatively or, on the other hand, accept the center as one way to give their children something better than they've had.

There can also be another positive side to this: the center can serve as a model that adults might choose to emulate. Parents also suffer from many of the same problems as their children in the suburbs, the physical and often personal isolation of people from each other, the inability to develop communal activities beyond the ritualized town meeting and PTA meeting. The suburbs lack also places where controversial plays can be performed and controversial material discussed without being stopped by conservative school boards. There is no reason why the sensitivity groups, meditation yoga, body awareness exercises, and communitarian attitudes that engage many young people in the suburbs should become their exclusive preserve.

Suburbanites could, moreover, become less concerned about the rhetoric of individual freedom for others and begin to examine their own lives. They could begin to look at the roles the existing schools play in shaping the lives of children, going beyond the debate of whether to add a new wing to the school. They could look at the values that are promoted by the school system itself; for what kind of world are the schools preparing the children? They could go beyond the questions of racial integration of the present schools to examining the kinds of attitudes in their own lives that produce the racism that in turn becomes a problem in the context of a larger society.

One of the discoveries of such an inward analysis would be the realization that the students themselves have little opportunity to propose new ways of learning. No amount of extra-curricular activities nor "permissive" attitudes can correct this. The school is created by parents to train young people for a pattern of life that they think their children should be trained for. In this sense it is a reflection of the larger world around it. The student, like the poor resident living in the center city, finds himself in the position of *reacting to* programs of the administration rather than being able to initiate his own programs. For the student the issue might involve reacting to curriculum or grading policies; for low income intown residents it may take the form of reacting to the threat of urban renewal proposed by the city, rather than being able to initiate their own housing programs. Because of this conditioning, people controlled often see their ideas initially in the context of how the controllers see them.

> This thing (the youth center) might be a good idea, but if they (the faculty and administration) don't want us to do it, what can we do?

Even in the case of a "liberal" administration, many students recognize where they stand.

> We wanted to wear blue jeans to school, we organized the students to fight for this . . . what happened when we presented our demands was they had a meeting . . . then they told us we could wear anything we wanted, grow our hair long or have a beard.
>
> But the thing is, those are the things they thought we should want . . . maybe they are but the thing is that we always have to wait till they see it that way . . . we can't do it just because we want it.

To give high school students more say in their education, it is not enough to ask the school for more student control and participation in established programs. "Participation" and "recommendations" by students will not help unless the basic goals of the institution can be examined and changed. Can an administrator running the school make the decision that the concept of "schools" is obsolete and therefore should be abolished?

The crucial question of "participation" in the low income neighborhood or in the school is whether such participation involves any power over one's own existence or does it simply mean the power to go through the forms of predetermined ritual. A government official in charge of secondary schools said, in discussing the problems he was having with students, that he was "interested in what the young people had to say." He wanted to meet with them regularly so they could make "recommendations." Urban renewal administration frequently speaks the rhetoric of "citizen participation" and "planning with people." But who makes the final decisions after the public hearings?

Former Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger of Germany described what is perhaps the classic "liberal" attitude of those in power to those who are disenfranchised:

> We must not meet these young people in an attitude of self-assurance and self-esteem. The young must *feel* they are listened to. *Our* task is to know that responsibility *is still in our hands,* and at the same time to be open to the arguments of the young people. (my italics)

Former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey set the matter straight on this side of the ocean:

> . . . I think this younger generation has got something to say to us and I'm not sure that what they say all the time is necessarily the final word. I always believed in the right of a person to speak. I don't think he always has to be taken seriously but he ought to have a right to say what he wants to say.

That is, those in power decide who should be taken seriously or not, but let everybody talk as much as they like.

AT PRESENT the youth center is still only a gleam in the students' eyes; there is land to be acquired and money to be raised. Talk is now of foundation support, help from

some parents and a benefit rock concert. As an idea, however, it has continued to grow and become more defined by raising environmental issues through a design process involving the users. When the designer operates in this way, as a kind of environmental idea man for promoting new social institutions for the disenfranchised, he faces the possibility of "failure," in the conventional sense of getting something built, more often than in the operation of a traditional architectural office. The usual client, who comes to the architect with a reasonably well-defined program of what he wants, together with an easily fundable project, is a much safer bet. But if the architect's work is to have social relevance in the sense of producing non-repressive environments, then he must attempt to raise the possibilities of a new architecture for the disenfranchised user. Since the pattern of human interactions sets the requirements for architectural form, establishing new contexts for interaction, such as a liberated zone, helps move in this direction. The resultant architecture should reflect the way people get together either in personal one-to-one relationships or in more complex social organization. Users as individuals or groups should be able to trade architectural interests with each other and negotiate these interests in ad hoc situations.

If the idea of a "liberated zone" should prevail, its significance would easily go beyond an immediate and somewhat unusual experiment for an after school activity. Should it be that people are more strongly motivated and better able to learn in an environment of their own creation, enlisting their own teachers, then the school as it exists today could change radically. One may imagine a set of liberated zones, each associated with a different number of people of several age groups running their own social orientation programs, determining for themselves the nature of their "education programs." People could discuss not only how they relate to each other, but also how they relate to their community. One feature in such a program could involve local government and community "leaders" talking with young people about how they run the community. The young people could also bring in the "non-leaders," and students from other communities and colleges. Part of such a program could involve both conservative and radical educators debating the meaning of education speaking on the students' own turf, and at their request.

Whether in fact everything that is now thought in the school will someday be learned in liberated zones run by students must ultimately rest with the users. My own prediction is that it is possible, but that liberated zones as part of a general movement toward decentralization and user control will be only one of a number of alternate ways young people can develop to structure their own learning process. It may just be that in a liberated zone we are witnessing a movement for a kind of rational decentralization. Not only is there decentralization in the sense of creating a smaller scale institution but there is the possibility of a real shift in basic power relationships. Moving control from administrators and faculty to parents (the currently popular theme) may be reasonable for the younger children. But as children get older and want to make their own decisions, decentralization must involve a shift in power to those who are currently being processed—the students. Real decision making by the users of a physical or social environment is the true test of democracy.

Robert Goodman

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Why Pupils Don't Learn Held Mystery

By M. S. GLADDLER

Dr. Nathan Brown, Acting Superintendent of Schools, said yesterday that despite the great amounts of money invested in special teaching programs, nobody knew why certain children—especially those in poverty areas—were not profiting from the educational program.

Testifying before the State Assembly's Standing Committee on Education, Dr. Brown urged that the State establish a research program to find the answer to this problem crucial to public-school education in the poverty areas.

"The issue in all large cities has been to make the schools work for the children in the poverty areas," Dr. Brown told the committee.

"While the results in New York City are better than in other cities this does not tell the real story of why these children are not served.

"We have been spending a great deal of money on educational programs which have little relation to the causes. Nobody knows why certain children are not profiting from the educational program.

State Urged to Lead

Dr. Brown said New York State could take the leadership in education by establishing a research program to "determine why the schools are unable to produce for poor children and why they can't meet the needs of all children."

Federal funds provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 supported various programs in New York City. These programs included the employment of paraprofessionals in educational assistants and provided for prekindergarten, parental involvement in education, Afro-American and Puerto Rican cultural heritage studies, homework helper and tutorial assistance, services to institutionalized pupils and projects for handicapped students.

The committee, under the chairmanship of Assemblyman Constance E. Cook, Republican of Ithaca, is holding hearings in many cities and villages to gather information that may help improve public-school education. Yesterday's hearing took place in the State Office Building at 80 Centre Street.

Dr. Brown said that by federal decentralization of the New York public school system but that "nobody there states it will solve the education problem for the poor."

Lag Charged

He added that nobody had been able to demonstrate a cause and effect relationship nor had anyone proved that centralized control of the public school system had been responsible for the failure of the programs.

"Money is being spent on new gimmicks," Dr. Brown said, "but nobody knows the cause and effect relationship nor have efforts at limited decentralization but they are not producing results and nobody knows why."

Emanuel Kaffa, president of the New York State Teachers Association, which claims 108,000 members in systems out side New York City, said in his testimony that the public-school system was still in "the service."

Bob Adelman

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